CHAP. IV.

vaniſhes, and his mind is at eaſe. His courage is raiſed, his underſtanding is enlightened, and his heart dilates with joy.

Human ſociety may be compared to a heap of embers, which when placed aſunder, can retain neither their light nor heat, amidſt the ſurrounding elements; but when brought together they mutually give heat and light to each other; the flame breaks forth, and not only defends itſelf, but ſubdues every thing around it.

The ſecurity, the happineſs, and the ſtrength of human ſociety, ſpring ſolely from the reciprocal benevolent affections of its members.

The benevolent affections, though they be all honourable and lovely, are not all equally ſo. There is a ſubordination among them; and the honour we pay to them generally correſponds to the extent of their object.

The good huſband, the good father, the good friend, the good neighbour, we honour as a good man, worthy of our love and affection. But the man in whom theſe more private affections are ſwallowed up in zeal for the good of his country, and of mankind, who goes about doing good, and ſeeks opportunities of being uſeful to his ſpecies, we revere as more than a good man, as a hero, as a good angel.

CHAP. V.

Of Malevolent Affection.

ARE there, in the conſtitution of man, any affections that may be called *malevolent?* What are they? And what is their uſe and end?

To

To me there ſeem to be two, which we may call by that name. They are emulation and reſentment. Theſe I take to be parts of the human conſtitution, given us by our Maker for good ends, and, when properly directed and regulated, of excellent uſe. But, as their exceſs or abuſe, to which human nature is very prone, is the ſource and ſpring of all the malevolence that is to be found among men, it is on that account I call them malevolent.

If any man thinks that they deſerve a ſofter name, ſince they may be exercifed according to the intention of nature, without malevolence, to this I have no objection.

By emulation, I mean, a deſire of ſuperiority to our rivals in any purſuit, accompanied with an uneaſineſs at being ſurpaſſed.

Human life has juſtly been compared to a race. The prize is ſuperiority in one kind or another. But the ſpecies or forms (if I may uſe the expreſſion) of ſuperiority among men are infinitely diverſified.

There is no man ſo contemptible in his own eyes, as to hinder him from entering the lifts in one form or another; and he will always find competitors to rival him in his own way.

We ſee emulation among brute-animals. Dogs and horſes contend each with his kind in the race. Many animals of the gregarious kind contend for ſuperiority in their flock or herd, and ſhew manifeſt ſigns of jealouſy when others pretend to rival them.

The emulation of the brute-animals is moſtly confined to ſwiftneſs, or ſtrength, or favour with their females. But the emulation of the human kind has a much wider field.

In

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In every profeſſion, and in every accompliſhment of body or mind, real or imaginary, there are rivalſhips. Literary men rival one another in literary abilities. Artiſts in their ſeveral arts. The fair ſex in their beauty and attractions, and in the reſpect paid them by the other ſex.

In every political ſociety, from a petty corporation up to the national adminiſtration, there is a rivalſhip for power and influence.

Men have a natural deſire of power without reſpect to the power of others. This we call *ambition*. But the deſire of ſuperiority, either in power, or in any thing we think worthy of eſtimation, has a reſpect to rivals, and is what we properly call *emulation*.

The ſtronger the deſire is, the more pungent will be the uneaſineſs of being found behind, and the mind will be the more hurt by this humiliating view.

Emulation has a manifeſt tendency to improvement. Without it life would ſtagnate, and the diſcoveries of art and genius would be at a ſtand. This principle produces a conſtant fermentation in ſociety, by which, though dregs may be produced, the better part is purified and exalted to a perfection, which it could not otherwiſe attain.

We have not ſufficient *data* for a compariſon of the good and bad effects which this principle actually produces in ſociety; but there is ground to think of this, as of other natural principles, that the good overbalances the ill. As far as it is under the dominion of reaſon and virtue, its effects are always good; when left to be guided by paſſion and folly, they are often very bad.

Reaſon

Reaſon directs us to ſtrive for ſuperiority, only in things that have real excellence, otherwiſe we ſpend our labour for that which profiteth not. To value ourſelves for ſuperiority in things that have no real worth, or none compared with what they coſt, is to be vain of our own folly; and to be uneaſy at the ſuperiority of others in ſuch things, is no leſs ridiculous.

Reaſon directs us to ſtrive for ſuperiority only in things in our power, and attainable by our exertion, otherwiſe we ſhall be like the frog in the fable, who ſwelled herſelf till ſhe burſt, in order to equal the ox in magnitude.

To check all deſire of things not attainable, and every uneaſy thought in the want of them, is an obvious dictate of prudence, as well as of virtue and religion.

If emulation be regulated by ſuch maxims of reaſon, and all undue partiality to ourſelves be laid aſide, it will be a powerful principle of our improvement, without hurt to any other perſon. It will give ſtrength to the nerves, and vigour to the mind, in every noble and manly purſuit.

But diſmal are its effects, when it is not under the direction of reaſon and virtue. It has often the moſt malignant influence on mens opinions, on their affections, and on their actions.

It is an old obſervation, that affection follows opinion; and it is undoubtedly true in many caſes. A man cannot be grateful without the opinion of a favour done him. He cannot have deliberate reſentment without the opinion of an injury; nor eſteem without the opinion of ſome eſtimable quality; nor compaſſion without the opinion of ſuffering.

But it is no leſs true, that opinion ſometimes follows affection, not that it ought, but that it actually does ſo, by giving a falſe

CHAP. V. bias to our judgment. We are apt to be partial to our friends, and ſtill more to ourſelves.

Hence the deſire of ſuperiority leads men to put an undue eſtimation upon thoſe things wherein they excel, or think they excel. And, by this means, pride may feed itſelf upon the very dregs of human nature.

The ſame deſire of ſuperiority may lead men to undervalue thoſe things wherein they either deſpair of excelling, or care not to make the exertion neceſſary for that end. The grapes are ſour, ſaid the fox, when he ſaw them beyond his reach. The ſame principle leads men to detract from the merit of others, and to impute their brighteſt actions to mean or bad motives.

He who runs a race feels uneaſineſs at ſeeing another outſtrip him. This is uncorrupted nature, and the work of God within him. But this uneaſineſs may produce either of two very different effects. It may incite him to make more vigorous exertions, and to ſtrain every nerve to get before his rival. This is fair and honeſt emulation. This is the effect it is intended to produce. But if he has not fairneſs and candour of heart, he will look with an evil eye upon his competitor, and will endeavour to trip him, or to throw a ſtumbling-block in his way. This is pure envy, the moſt malignant paſſion that can lodge in the human breaſt; which devours, as its natural food, the fame and the happineſs of thoſe who are moſt deſerving of our eſteem.

If there be, in ſome men, a proneneſs to detract from the character, even of perſons unknown or indifferent, in others an avidity to hear and to propagate ſcandal, to what principle in human nature muſt we aſcribe theſe qualities? The failings of others ſurely add nothing to our worth, nor are they, in themſelves, a pleaſant ſubject of thought or of diſcourſe. But they flatter

flatter pride, by giving an opinion of our ſuperiority to thoſe from whom we detract. CHAP. V.

Is it not poſſible, that the ſame deſire of ſuperiority may have ſome ſecret influence upon thoſe who love to diſplay their eloquence in declaiming upon the corruption of human nature, and the wickedneſs, fraud and inſincerity of mankind in general? It ought always to be taken for granted, that the declaimer is an exception to the general rule, otherwiſe he would rather chuſe, even for his own ſake, to draw a veil over the nakedneſs of his ſpecies. But, hoping that his audience will be ſo civil as not to include him in the black deſcription, he riſes ſuperior by the depreſſion of the ſpecies, and ſtands alone, like NOAH in the antediluvian world. This looks like envy againſt the human race.

It would be endleſs, and no ways agreeable, to enumerate all the evils and all the vices which paſſion and folly beget upon emulation. Here, as in moſt caſes, the corruption of the beſt things is the worſt. In brute-animals, emulation has little matter to work upon, and its effects, good or bad, are few. It may produce battles of cocks and battles of bulls, and little elſe that is obſervable. But in mankind, it has an infinity of matter to work upon, and its good or bad effects, according as it is well or ill regulated and directed, multiply in proportion.

The concluſion to be drawn from what has been ſaid upon this principle is, That emulation, as far as it is a part of our conſtitution, is highly uſeful and important in ſociety; that in the wiſe and good, it produces the beſt effects without any harm; but in the fooliſh and vicious, it is the parent of a great part of the evils of life, and of the moſt malignant vices that ſtain human nature.

We are next to conſider reſentment.

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Nature diſpoſes us, when we are hurt, to reſiſt and retaliate. Beſides the bodily pain occaſioned by the hurt, the mind is ruffled, and a deſire raiſed to retaliate upon the author of the hurt or injury. This, in general, is what we call *anger* or *reſentment*.

A very important diſtinction is made by Biſhop BUTLER between ſudden reſentment, which is a blind impulſe ariſing from our conſtitution, and that which is deliberate. The firſt may be raiſed by hurt of any kind; but the laſt can only be raiſed by injury real or conceived.

The ſame diſtinction is made by Lord KAMES in his *Elements of Criticiſm*. What BUTLER calls *ſudden*, he calls *inſtinctive*.

We have not, in common language, different names for theſe different kinds of reſentment; but the diſtinction is very neceſſary, in order to our having juſt notions of this part of the human conſtitution. It correſponds perfectly with the diſtinction I have made between the animal and rational principles of action. For this ſudden or inſtinctive reſentment, is an animal principle common to us with brute-animals. But that reſentment which the authors I have named call *deliberate*, muſt fall under the claſs of rational principles.

It is to be obſerved, however, that, by referring it to that claſs, I do not mean, that it is always kept within the bounds that reaſon preſcribes, but only that it is proper to man as a reaſonable being, capable, by his rational faculties, of diſtinguiſhing between hurt and injury; a diſtinction which no brute-animal can make.

Both theſe kinds of reſentment are raiſed, whether the hurt or injury be done to ourſelves, or to thoſe we are intereſted in.

Wherever

Wherever there is any benevolent affection towards others, we reſent their wrongs, in proportion to the ſtrength of our affection. Pity and ſympathy with the ſufferer, produce reſentment againſt the author of the ſuffering, as naturally as concern for ourſelves produces reſentment of our own wrongs.

I ſhall firſt conſider that reſentment which I call *animal*, which BUTLER calls *ſudden*, and Lord KAMES *inſtinctive*.

In every animal to which nature hath given the power of hurting its enemy, we ſee an endeavour to retaliate the ill that is done to it. Even a mouſe will bite when it cannot run away.

Perhaps there may be ſome animals to whom nature hath given no offenſive weapon. To ſuch, anger and reſentment would be of no uſe; and I believe we ſhall find, that they never ſhew any ſign of it. But there are few of this kind.

Some of the more ſagacious animals can be provoked to fierce anger, and retain it long. Many of them ſhew great animoſity in defending their young, who hardly ſhew any in defending themſelves. Others reſiſt every aſſault made upon the flock or herd to which they belong. Bees defend their hive, wild beaſts their den, and birds their neſt.

This ſudden reſentment operates in a ſimilar manner in men and in brutes, and appears to be given by nature to both for the ſame end, namely, for defence, even in caſes where there is no time for deliberation. It may be compared to that natural inſtinct, by which a man, who has loſt his balance and begins to fall, makes a ſudden and violent effort to recover himſelf, without any intention or deliberation.

In ſuch efforts, men often exert a degree of muſcular ſtrength beyond

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beyond what they are able to exert by a calm determination of the will, and thereby ſave themſelves from many a dangerous fall.

By a like violent and ſudden impulſe, nature prompts us to repel hurt upon the cauſe of it, whether it be man or beaſt. The inſtinct before mentioned is ſolely defenſive, and is prompted by fear. This ſudden reſentment is offenſive, and is prompted by anger, but with a view to defence.

Man, in his preſent ſtate, is ſurrounded with ſo many dangers from his own ſpecies, from brute-animals, from every thing around him, that he has need of ſome defenſive armour that ſhall always be ready in the moment of danger. His reaſon is of great uſe for this purpoſe, when there is time to apply it. But, in many caſes, the miſchief would be done before reaſon could think of the means of preventing it.

The wiſdom of nature hath provided two means to ſupply this defect of our reaſon. One of theſe is the inſtinct before mentioned, by which the body, upon the appearance of danger, is inſtantly, and without thought or intention, put in that poſture which is proper for preventing the danger, or leſſening it. Thus, we wink hard when our eyes are threatened; we bend the body to avoid a ſtroke; we make a ſudden effort to recover our balance, when in danger of falling. By ſuch means we are guarded from many dangers which our reaſon would come too late to prevent.

But as offenſive arms are often the ſureſt means of defence, by deterring the enemy from an aſſault, nature hath alſo provided man, and other animals, with this kind of defence, by that ſudden reſentment of which we now ſpeak, which outruns the quickeſt determinations of reaſon, and takes fire in an inſtant, threatening the enemy with retaliation.

The

The firſt of theſe principles operates upon the defender only; but this operates both upon the defender and the aſſailant, inſpiring the former with courage and animoſity, and ſtriking terror into the latter. It proclaims to all aſſailants, what our ancient Scottiſh kings did upon their coins, by the emblem of a thiſtle, with this motto, *Nemo me impune laceſſet.* By this, in innumerable caſes, men and beaſts are deterred from doing hurt, and others thereby ſecured from ſuffering it.

But as reſentment ſuppoſes an object on whom we may retaliate, how comes it to paſs, that in brutes very often, and ſometimes in our own ſpecies, we ſee it wreaked upon inanimate things, which are incapable of ſuffering by it?

Perhaps it might be a ſufficient anſwer to this queſtion, That nature acts by general laws, which, in ſome particular caſes, may go beyond, or fall ſhort of their intention, though they be ever ſo well adapted to it in general.

But I confeſs it ſeems to me impoſſible, that there ſhould be reſentment againſt a thing, which at that very moment is conſidered as inanimate, and conſequently incapable either of intending hurt, or of being puniſhed. For what can be more abſurd, than to be angry with the knife for cutting me, or with the weight for falling upon my toes? There muſt therefore, I conceive, be ſome momentary notion or conception that the object of our reſentment is capable of puniſhment; and if it be natural, before reflection, to be angry with things inanimate, it ſeems to be a neceſſary conſequence, that it is natural to think that they have life and feeling.

Several phænomena in human nature lead us to conjecture that, in the earlieſt period of life, we are apt to think every object about us to be animated. Judging of them by ourſelves, we aſcribe to them the feelings we are conſcious of in ourſelves.

So

CHAP. V. So we ſee a little girl judges of her doll and of her play-things. And ſo we ſee rude nations judge of the heavenly bodies, of the elements, and of the ſea, rivers, and fountains.

If this be ſo, it ought not to be ſaid, that by reaſon and experience, we learn to aſcribe life and intelligence to things which we before conſidered as inanimate. It ought rather to be ſaid, That by reaſon and experience we learn that certain things are inanimate, to which at firſt we aſcribed life and intelligence.

If this be true, it is leſs ſurpriſing that, before reflection, we ſhould for a moment relapſe into this prejudice of our early years, and treat things as if they had life, which we once believed to have it.

It does not much affect our preſent argument, whether this be, or be not the cauſe, why a dog purſues and gnaſhes at the ſtone that hurt him; and why a man in a paſſion, for loſing at play, ſometimes wreaks his vengeance on the cards or dice.

It is not ſtrange that a blind animal impulſe ſhould ſometimes loſe its proper direction. In brutes this has no bad conſequence; in men the leaſt ray of reflection corrects it, and ſhews its abſurdity.

It is ſufficiently evident, upon the whole, that this ſudden, or animal reſentment, is intended by nature for our defence. It prevents miſchief by the fear of puniſhment. It is a kind of penal ſtatute, promulgated by nature, the execution of which is committed to the ſufferer.

It may be expected indeed, that one who judges in his own cauſe, will be diſpoſed to ſeek more than an equitable redreſs. But this diſpoſition is checked by the reſentment of the other party.

Yet

Yet, in the ſtate of nature, injuries once begun, will often be reciprocated between the parties, until mortal enmity is produced, and each party thinks himſelf ſafe only in the deſtruction of his enemy.

This right of redreſſing and puniſhing our own wrongs, ſo apt to be abuſed, is one of thoſe natural rights, which, in political ſociety, is given up to the laws, and to the civil magiſtrate; and this indeed is one of the capital advantages we reap from the political union, that the evils ariſing from ungoverned reſentment are in a great degree prevented.

Although deliberate reſentment does not properly belong to the claſs of animal principles; yet, as both have the ſame name, and are diſtinguiſhed only by Philoſophers, and as in real life they are commonly intermixed, I ſhall here make ſome remarks upon it.

A ſmall degree of reaſon and reflection teaches a man that injury only, and not mere hurt, is a juſt object of reſentment to a rational creature. A man may ſuffer grievouſly by the hand of another, not only without injury, but with the moſt friendly intention; as in the caſe of a painful chirurgical operation. Every man of common ſenſe ſees, that to reſent ſuch ſuffering, is not the part of a man, but of a brute.

Mr Locke mentions a gentleman who, having been cured of madneſs by a very harſh and offenſive operation, with great ſenſe of gratitude, owned the cure as the greateſt obligation he could have received, but could never bear the ſight of the operator, becauſe it brought back the idea of that agony which he had endured from his hands.

In this caſe we ſee diſtinctly the operation both of the animal, and of the rational principle. The firſt produced an aver-

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ſion to the operator, which reaſon was not able to overcome; and probably in a weak mind, might have produced laſting reſentment and hatred. But, in this gentleman, reaſon ſo far prevailed, as to make him ſenſible that gratitude, and not reſentment, was due.

Suffering may give a bias to the judgment, and make us apprehend injury where no injury is done. But, I think, without an apprehenſion of injury, there can be no deliberate reſentment.

Hence, among enlightened nations, hoſtile armies fight without anger or reſentment. The vanquiſhed are not treated as offenders, but as brave men who have fought for their country unſucceſsfully, and who are entitled to every office of humanity conſiſtent with the ſafety of the conquerors.

If we analyze that deliberate reſentment which is proper to rational creatures, we ſhall find that though it agrees with that which is merely animal in ſome reſpects, it differs in others. Both are accompanied with an uneaſy ſenſation, which diſturbs the peace of the mind. Both prompt us to ſeek redreſs of our ſufferings, and ſecurity from harm. But, in deliberate reſentment, there muſt be an opinion of injury done or intended. And an opinion of injury implies an idea of juſtice, and conſequently a moral faculty.

The very notion of an injury is, that it is leſs than we may juſtly claim; as, on the contrary, the notion of a favour is, that it is more than we can juſtly claim. Whence it is evident, that juſtice is the ſtandard, by which both a favour, and an injury, are to be weighed and eſtimated. Their very nature and definition conſiſt in their exceeding or falling ſhort of this ſtandard. No man therefore, can have the idea either of a favour or of an injury, who has not the idea of juſtice.

That

That very idea of juſtice which enters into cool and deliberate reſentment, tends to reſtrain its exceſſes. For as there is injuſtice in doing an injury, ſo there is injuſtice in puniſhing it beyond meaſure.

To a man of candour and reflection, conſciouſneſs of the frailty of human nature, and that he has often ſtood in need of forgiveneſs himſelf, the pleaſure of renewing good underſtanding, after it has been interrupted, the inward approbation of a generous and forgiving diſpoſition, and even the irkſomeneſs and uneaſineſs of a mind ruffled by reſentment, plead ſtrongly againſt its exceſſes.

Upon the whole, when we conſider, That, on the one hand, every benevolent affection is pleaſant in its nature, is health to the ſoul, and a cordial to the ſpirits; That nature has made even the outward expreſſion of benevolent affections in the countenance, pleaſant to every beholder, and the chief ingredient of beauty in the *human face divine*; That, on the other hand, every malevolent affection, not only in its faulty exceſſes, but in its moderate degrees, is vexation and diſquiet to the mind, and even gives deformity to the countenance, it is evident that, by theſe ſignals, nature loudly admoniſhes us to uſe the former as our daily bread, both for health and pleaſure, but to conſider the latter as a nauſeous medicine, which is never to be taken without neceſſity; and even then in no greater quantity than the neceſſity requires.

CHAP. VI.

Of Paſſion.

BEFORE I proceed to conſider the rational principles of action, it is proper to obſerve, that there are ſome things belonging to the mind, which have great influence upon human conduct, by exciting or allaying, inflaming or cooling the animal principles we have mentioned.

Three of this kind deſerve particular conſideration. I ſhall call them by the names of *paſſion, diſpoſition, and opinion.*

The meaning of the word *paſſion* is not preciſely aſcertained, either in common diſcourſe, or in the writings of Philoſophers.

I think it is commonly put to ſignify ſome agitation of mind, which is oppoſed to that ſtate of tranquillity and compoſure, in which a man is moſt maſter of himſelf.

The word πάθος, which anſwers to it in the Greek language, is, by CICERO, rendered by the word *perturbatio.*

It has always been conceived to bear analogy to a ſtorm at ſea, or to a tempeſt in the air. It does not therefore ſignify any thing in the mind that is conſtant and permanent, but ſomething that is occaſional, and has a limited duration, like a ſtorm or tempeſt.

Paſſion commonly produces ſenſible effects even upon the body. It changes the voice, the features, and the geſture. The external ſigns of paſſion have, in ſome caſes, a great reſemblance to thoſe of madneſs; in others, to thoſe of melancholy. It gives often

ten a degree of muſcular force and agility to the body, far be- CHAP. VI.
yond what it poſſeſſes in calm moments.

The effects of paſſion upon the mind are not leſs remarkable. It turns the thoughts involuntarily to the objects related to it, ſo that a man can hardly think of any thing elſe. It gives often a ſtrange bias to the judgment, making a man quickſighted in every thing that tends to inflame his paſſion, and to juſtify it, but blind to every thing that tends to moderate and allay it. Like a magic lanthorn, it raiſes up ſpectres and apparitions that have no reality, and throws falſe colours upon every object. It can turn deformity into beauty, vice into virtue, and virtue into vice.

The ſentiments of a man under its influence will appear abſurd and ridiculous, not only to other men, but even to himſelf when the ſtorm is ſpent and is ſucceeded by a calm. Paſſion often gives a violent impulſe to the will, and makes a man do what he knows he ſhall repent as long as he lives.

That ſuch are the effects of paſſion, I think all men agree. They have been deſcribed in lively colours by poets, orators and moraliſts, in all ages. But men have given more attention to the effects of paſſion than to its nature; and while they have copiouſly and elegantly deſcribed the former, they have not preciſely defined the latter.

The controverſy between the ancient Peripatetics and the Stoics, with regard to the paſſions, was probably owing to their affixing different meanings to the word. The one ſect maintained, that the paſſions are good, and uſeful parts of our conſtitution, while they are held under the government of reaſon. The other ſect, conceiving that nothing is to be called paſſion which does not, in ſome degree, cloud and darken the underſtanding, conſidered all paſſion as hoſtile to reaſon, and therefore maintained,

that,

CHAP. VI. that, in the wiſe man, paſſion ſhould have no exiſtence, but be utterly exterminated.

If both ſects had agreed about the definition of paſſion, they would probably have had no difference. But while one conſidered paſſion only as the cauſe of thoſe bad effects which it often produces, and the other conſidered it as fitted by nature to produce good effects, while it is under ſubjection to reaſon, it does not appear that what one ſect juſtified, was the ſame thing which the other condemned. Both allowed that no dictate of paſſion ought to be followed in oppoſition to reaſon. Their difference therefore was verbal more than real, and was owing to their giving different meanings to the ſame word.

The preciſe meaning of this word ſeems not to be more clearly aſcertained among modern Philoſophers.

Mr HUME gives the name of *paſſion* to every principle of action in the human mind; and, in conſequence of this maintains, that every man is, and ought to be led by his paſſions, and that the uſe of reaſon is to be ſubſervient to the paſſions.

Dr HUTCHESON, conſidering all the principles of action as ſo many determinations or motions of the will, divides them into the calm and the turbulent. The turbulent, he ſays, are our appetites and our paſſions. Of the paſſions, as well as of the calm determinations, he ſays, that "ſome are benevolent, others are "ſelfiſh; that anger, envy, indignation, and ſome others, may "be either ſelfiſh or benevolent, according as they ariſe from "ſome oppoſition to our own intereſts, or to thoſe of our friends, "or perſons beloved or eſteemed."

It appears, therefore, that this excellent author gives the name of *paſſions*, not to every principle of action, but to ſome, and to thoſe

thoſe only when they are turbulent and vehement, not when they are calm and deliberate.

Our natural deſires and affections may be ſo calm as to leave room for reflection, ſo that we find no difficulty in deliberating coolly, whether, in ſuch a particular inſtance, they ought to be gratified or not. On other occaſions, they may be ſo importunate as to make deliberation very difficult, urging us, by a kind of violence, to their immediate gratification.

Thus, a man may be ſenſible of an injury without being inflamed. He judges coolly of the injury, and of the proper means of redreſs. This is reſentment without paſſion. It leaves to the man the entire command of himſelf.

On another occaſion, the ſame principle of reſentment riſes into a flame. His blood boils within him; his looks, his voice and his geſture are changed; he can think of nothing but immediate revenge, and feels a ſtrong impulſe, without regard to conſequences, to ſay and do things which his cool reaſon cannot juſtify. This is the paſſion of reſentment.

What has been ſaid of reſentment may eaſily be applied to other natural deſires and affections. When they are ſo calm as neither to produce any ſenſible effects upon the body, nor to darken the underſtanding and weaken the power of ſelf-command, they are not called paſſions. But the ſame principle, when it becomes ſo violent as to produce theſe effects upon the body and upon the mind, is a paſſion, or, as CICERO very properly calls it, a perturbation.

It is evident, that this meaning of the word *paſſion* accords much better with its common uſe in language, than that which Mr HUME gives it.

When

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When he ſays, that men ought to be governed by their paſſions only, and that the uſe of reaſon is to be ſubſervient to the paſſions, this, at firſt hearing, appears a ſhocking paradox, repugnant to good morals and to common ſenſe; but, like moſt other paradoxes, when explained according to his meaning, it is nothing but an abuſe of words.

For if we give the name of *paſſion* to every principle of action, in every degree, and give the name of *reaſon* ſolely to the power of diſcerning the fitneſs of means to ends, it will be true, that the uſe of reaſon is to be ſubſervient to the paſſions.

As I wiſh to uſe words as agreeably as poſſible to their common uſe in language, I ſhall, by the word *paſſion* mean, not any principle of action diſtinct from thoſe deſires and affections before explained, but ſuch a degree of vehemence in them, or in any of them, as is apt to produce thoſe effects upon the body or upon the mind which have been above deſcribed.

Our appetites, even when vehement, are not, I think, very commonly called paſſions, yet they are capable of being inflamed to rage, and in that caſe their effects are very ſimilar to thoſe of the paſſions; and what is ſaid of one may be applied to both.

Having explained what I mean by paſſions, I think it unneceſſary to enter into any enumeration of them, ſince they differ, not in kind, but rather in degree, from the principles already enumerated.

The common diviſion of the paſſions into deſire and averſion, hope and fear, joy and grief, has been mentioned almoſt by every author who has treated of them, and needs no explication. But we may obſerve, that theſe are ingredients or modifications, not

not of the paſſions only, but of every principle of action, animal and rational. CHAP. VI

All of them imply the deſire of ſome object; and the deſire of an object cannot be without averſion to its contrary; and, according as the object is preſent or abſent, deſire and averſion will be variouſly modified into joy or grief, hope or fear. It is evident, that deſire and averſion, joy and grief, hope and fear, may be either calm and ſedate, or vehement and paſſionate.

Paſſing theſe, therefore, as common to all principles of action, whether calm or vehement, I ſhall only make ſome obſervations on paſſion in general, which tend to ſhew its influence on human conduct.

Firſt, It is paſſion that makes us liable to ſtrong temptations. Indeed, if we had no paſſions, we ſhould hardly be under any temptation to wrong conduct. For, when we view things calmly, and free from any of the falſe colours which paſſion throws upon them, we can hardly fail to ſee the right and the wrong, and to ſee that the firſt is more eligible than the laſt.

I believe a cool and deliberate preference of ill to good is never the firſt ſtep into vice.

" When the woman ſaw that the tree was good for food, and " that it was pleaſant to the eyes, and a tree to be deſired to " make one wiſe, ſhe took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and " gave alſo to her huſband with her and he did eat; and the " eyes of them both were opened." Inflamed deſire had blinded the eyes of their underſtanding.

Fix'd on the fruit ſhe gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the ſound

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Yet rung of his perſuaſive words impregn'd
With reaſon to her ſeeming, and with truth.
—— Fair to the eye, inviting to the taſte,
Of virtue to make wiſe, what hinders then
To reach and feed at once both body and mind. MILTON.

Thus our firſt parents were tempted to diſobey their Maker, and all their poſterity are liable to temptation from the ſame cauſe. Paſſion, or violent appetite, firſt blinds the underſtanding, and then perverts the will.

It is paſſion, therefore, and the vehement motions of appetite, that makes us liable, in our preſent ſtate, to ſtrong temptations to deviate from our duty. This is the lot of human nature in the preſent period of our exiſtence.

Human virtue muſt gather ſtrength by ſtruggle and effort. As infants, before they can walk without ſtumbling, muſt be expoſed to many a fall and bruiſe; as wreſtlers acquire their ſtrength and agility by many a combat and violent exertion; ſo it is in the nobleſt powers of human nature, as well as the meaneſt, and even in virtue itſelf.

It is not only made manifeſt by temptation and trial, but by theſe means it acquires its ſtrength and vigour.

Men muſt acquire patience by ſuffering, and fortitude by being expoſed to danger, and every other virtue by ſituations that put it to trial and exerciſe.

This, for any thing we know, may be neceſſary in the nature of things. It is certainly a law of nature with regard to man.

Whether there may be orders of intelligent and moral creatures who never were ſubject to any temptation, nor had their virtue

virtue put to any trial, we cannot without preſumption determine. But it is evident, that this neither is, nor ever was the lot of man, not even in the ſtate of innocence.

Sad, indeed, would be the condition of man, if the temptations to which, by the conſtitution of his nature, and by his circumſtances, he is liable, were irreſiſtible. Such a ſtate would not at all be a ſtate of trial and diſcipline.

Our condition here is ſuch, that, on the one hand, paſſion often tempts and ſolicits us to do wrong; on the other hand, reaſon and conſcience oppoſe the dictates of paſſion. The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh. And upon the iſſue of this conflict, the character of the man and his fate depend.

If reaſon be victorious, his virtue is ſtrengthened; he has the inward ſatisfaction of having fought a good fight in behalf of his duty, and the peace of his mind is preſerved.

If, on the other hand, paſſion prevails againſt the ſenſe of duty, the man is conſcious of having done what he ought not, and might not have done. His own heart condemns him, and he is guilty to himſelf.

This conflict between the paſſions of our animal nature and the calm dictates of reaſon and conſcience, is not a theory invented to ſolve the phænomena of human conduct, it is a fact, of which every man who attends to his own conduct is conſcious.

In the moſt ancient philoſophy, of which we have any account, I mean that of the Pythagorean ſchool, the mind of man was compared to a ſtate, or commonwealth, in which there are

CHAP. VI. various powers, ſome that ought to govern, and others that ought to be ſubordinate.

The good of the whole, which is the ſupreme law in this, as in every commonwealth, requires that this ſubordination be preſerved, and that the governing powers have always the aſcendant over the appetites and paſſions. All wiſe and good conduct conſiſts in this. All folly and vice in the prevalence of paſſion over the dictates of reaſon.

This philoſophy was adopted by PLATO; and it is ſo agreeable to what every man feels in himſelf, that it muſt always prevail with men who think without bias to a ſyſtem.

The governing powers, of which theſe ancient Philoſophers ſpeak, are the ſame which I call the *rational* principles of action, and which I ſhall have occaſion to explain. I only mention them here, becauſe, without a regard to them, the influence of the paſſions, and their rank in our conſtitution, cannot be diſtinctly underſtood.

A *ſecond* obſervation is, That the impulſe of paſſion is not always to what is bad, but very often to what is good, and what our reaſon approves. There are ſome paſſions, as Dr HUTCHESON obſerves, that are benevolent, as well as others that are ſelfiſh.

The affections of reſentment and emulation, with thoſe that ſpring from them, from their very nature, diſturb and diſquiet the mind, though they be not carried beyond the bounds which reaſon preſcribes; and therefore they are commonly called paſſions, even in their moderate degrees. From a ſimilar cauſe, the benevolent affections, which are placid in their nature, and are rarely carried beyond the bounds of reaſon, are very ſeldom called paſſions. We do not give the name of paſſion to benevolence,

volence, gratitude, or friendſhip. Yet we muſt except from this general rule, love between the ſexes, which, as it commonly diſcompoſes the mind, and is not eaſily kept within reaſonable bounds, is always called a paſſion.

All our natural deſires and affections are good and neceſſary parts of our conſtitution; and paſſion, being only a certain degree of vehemence in theſe, its natural tendency is to good, and it is by accident that it leads us wrong.

Paſſion is very properly ſaid to be blind. It looks not beyond the preſent gratification. It belongs to reaſon to attend to the accidental circumſtances which may ſometimes make that gratification improper or hurtful. When there is no impropriety in it, much more when it is our duty, paſſion aids reaſon, and gives additional force to its dictates.

Sympathy with the diſtreſſed may bring them a charitable relief, when a calm ſenſe of duty would be too weak to produce the effect.

Objects, either good or ill, conceived to be very diſtant, when they are conſidered coolly, have not that influence upon men which in reaſon they ought to have. Imagination, like the eye, diminiſheth its objects in proportion to their diſtance. The paſſions of hope and fear muſt be raiſed, in order to give ſuch objects their due magnitude in the imagination, and their due influence upon our conduct.

The dread of diſgrace and of the civil magiſtrate, and the apprehenſion of future puniſhment, prevent many crimes, which bad men, without theſe reſtraints, would commit, and contribute greatly to the peace and good order of ſociety.

There is no bad action which ſome paſſion may not prevent; nor

CHAP. VI. nor is there any external good action, of which ſome paſſion may not be the main ſpring; and, it is very probable, that even the paſſions of men, upon the whole, do more good to ſociety than hurt.

The ill that is done draws our attention more, and is imputed ſolely to human paſſions. The good may have better motives, and charity leads us to think that it has; but, as we ſee not the heart, it is impoſſible to determine what ſhare men's paſſions may have in its production.

The *laſt* obſervation is, That if we diſtinguiſh, in the effects of our paſſions, thoſe which are altogether involuntary, and without the ſphere of our power, from the effects which may be prevented by an exertion, perhaps a great exertion, of ſelf-government; we ſhall find the firſt to be good and highly uſeful, and the laſt only to be bad.

Not to ſpeak of the effects of moderate paſſions upon the health of the body, to which ſome agitation of this kind ſeems to be no leſs uſeful than ſtorms and tempeſts to the ſalubrity of the air; every paſſion naturally draws our attention to its object, and intereſts us in it.

The mind of man is naturally deſultory, and when it has no intereſting object in view, roves from one to another, without fixing its attention upon any one. A tranſient and careleſs glance is all that we beſtow upon objects in which we take no concern. It requires a ſtrong degree of curioſity, or ſome more important paſſion, to give us that intereſt in an object which is neceſſary to our giving attention to it. And, without attention, we can form no true and ſtable judgment of any object.

Take away the paſſions, and it is not eaſy to ſay how great

a part of mankind would reſemble thoſe frivolous mortals, who never had a thought that engaged them in good earneſt. CHAP. VI.

It is not mere judgment or intellectual ability that enables a man to excel in any art or ſcience. He muſt have a love and admiration of it bordering upon enthuſiaſm, or a paſſionate deſire of the fame, or of ſome other advantage to be got by that excellence. Without this, he would not undergo the labour and fatigue of his faculties, which it requires. So that, I think, we may with juſtice allow no ſmall merit to the paſſions, even in the diſcoveries and improvements of the arts and ſciences.

If the paſſions for fame and diſtinction were extinguiſhed, it would be difficult to find men ready to undertake the cares and toils of government; and few perhaps would make the exertion neceſſary to raiſe themſelves above the ignoble vulgar.

The involuntary ſigns of the paſſions and diſpoſitions of the mind, in the voice, features, and action, are a part of the human conſtitution which deſerves admiration. The ſignification of thoſe ſigns is known to all men by nature, and previous to all experience.

They are ſo many openings into the ſouls of our fellow-men, by which their ſentiments become viſible to the eye. They are a natural language common to mankind, without which it would have been impoſſible to have invented any artificial language.

It is from the natural ſigns of the paſſions and diſpoſitions of the mind, that the human form derives its beauty; that painting, poetry, and muſic, derive their expreſſion; that eloquence derives it greateſt force, and converſation its greateſt charm.

The paſſions, when kept within their proper bounds, give life and vigour to the whole man. Without them man would be a ſlug.

We

CHAP. VI. We ſee what poliſh and animation the paſſion of love, when honourable and not unſucceſsful, gives to both ſexes.

The paſſion for military glory raiſes the brave commander, in the day of battle, far above himſelf, making his countenance to ſhine, and his eyes to ſparkle. The glory of old England warms the heart even of the Britiſh tar, and makes him deſpiſe every danger.

As to the bad effects of paſſion, it muſt be acknowledged that it often gives a ſtrong impulſe to what is bad, and what a man condemns himſelf for, as ſoon as it is done. But he muſt be conſcious that the impulſe, though ſtrong, was not irreſiſtible, otherwiſe he could not condemn himſelf.

We allow that a ſudden and violent paſſion, into which a man is ſurpriſed, alleviates a bad action; but if it was irreſiſtible, it would not only alleviate, but totally exculpate, which it never does, either in the judgment of the man himſelf, or of others.

To ſum up all, paſſion furniſhes a very ſtrong inſtance of the truth of the common maxim, That the corruption of the beſt things is worſt.

CHAP. VII.

Of Diſpoſition.

BY *diſpoſition* I mean a ſtate of mind which, while it laſts, gives a tendency, or proneneſs, to be moved by certain animal principles, rather than by others; while, at another time, another ſtate of mind, in the ſame perſon, may give the aſcendant to other animal principles.

It

It was before obſerved, that it is a property of our appetites to be periodical, ceaſing for a time, when ſated by their objects, and returning regularly after certain periods.

Even thoſe principles which are not periodical, have their ebbs and flows occaſionally, according to the preſent diſpoſition of the mind.

Among ſome of the principles of action there is a natural affinity, ſo that one of the tribe naturally diſpoſes to thoſe which are allied to it.

Such an affinity has been obſerved by many good authors to be among all the benevolent affections. The exerciſe of one benevolent affection gives a proneneſs to the exerciſe of others.

There is a certain placid and agreeable tone of mind which is common to them all, which ſeems to be the bond of that connection and affinity they have with one another.

The malevolent affections have alſo an affinity, and mutually diſpoſe to each other, by means, perhaps, of that diſagreeable feeling common to them all, which makes the mind ſore and uneaſy.

As far as we can trace the cauſes of the different diſpoſitions of the mind, they ſeem to be in ſome caſes owing to thoſe aſſociating powers of the principles of action, which have a natural affinity, and are prone to keep company with one another; ſometimes to accidents of good or bad fortune, and ſometimes, no doubt, the ſtate of the body may have influence upon the diſpoſition of the mind.

At one time the ſtate of the mind, like a ſerene unclouded ſky, ſhews every thing in the moſt agreeable light. Then a man

CHAP VII. is prone to benevolence, compaſſion, and every kind affection; unſuſpicious, not eaſily provoked.

The Poets have obſerved that men have their *mollia tempora fandi*, when they are averſe from ſaying or doing a harſh thing; and artful men watch theſe occaſions, and know how to improve them to promote their ends.

This diſpoſition, I think, we commonly call *good humour*, of which, in the fair ſex, Mr POPE ſays,

Good humour only teaches charms to laſt,
Still makes new conqueſts, and maintains the paſt.

There is no diſpoſition more comfortable to the perſon himſelf, or more agreeable to others, than good humour. It is to the mind, what good health is to the body, putting a man in the capacity of enjoying every thing that is agreeable in life, and of uſing every faculty without clog or impediment. It diſpoſes to contentment with our lot, to benevolence to all men, to ſympathy with the diſtreſſed. It preſents every object in the moſt favourable light, and diſpoſes us to avoid giving or taking offence.

This happy diſpoſition ſeems to be the natural fruit of a good conſcience, and a firm belief that the world is under a wiſe and benevolent adminiſtration; and, when it ſprings from this root, it is an habitual ſentiment of piety.

Good humour is likewiſe apt to be produced by happy ſucceſs, or unexpected good fortune. Joy and hope are favourable to it; vexation and diſappointment are unfavourable.

The only danger of this diſpoſition ſeems to be, That if we are not upon our guard, it may degenerate into levity, and indiſpoſe

indiſpoſe us to a proper degree of caution, and of attention to the future conſequences of our actions. CHAP. VII.

There is a diſpoſition oppoſite to good humour which we call *bad humour*, of which the tendency is directly contrary, and therefore its influence is as malignant, as that of the other is ſalutary.

Bad humour alone is ſufficient to make a man unhappy; it tinges every object with its own diſmal colour; and, like a part that is galled, is hurt by every thing that touches it. It takes offence where none was meant, and diſpoſes to diſcontent, jealouſy, envy, and, in general, to malevolence.

Another couple of oppoſite diſpoſitions are *elation* of mind, on the one hand, and *depreſſion*, on the other.

Theſe contrary diſpoſitions are both of an ambiguous nature; their influence may be good or bad, according as they are grounded on true or falſe opinion, and according as they are regulated.

That elation of mind which ariſes from a juſt ſenſe of the dignity of our nature, and of the powers and faculties with which GOD hath endowed us, is true magnanimity, and diſpoſes a man to the nobleſt virtues, and the moſt heroic actions and enterpriſes.

There is alſo an elation of mind, which ariſes from a conſciouſneſs of our worth and integrity, ſuch as JOB felt, when he ſaid, "Till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me. "My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go; my heart "ſhall not reproach me while I live." This may be called the pride of virtue; but it is a noble pride. It makes a man diſ-

CHAP. VII. dain to do what is baſe or mean. This is the true ſenſe of honour.

But there is an elation of mind ariſing from a vain opinion of our having talents, or worth, which we have not; or from putting an undue value upon any of our endowments of mind, body, or fortune. This is pride, the parent of many odious vices; ſuch as arrogance, undue contempt of others, ſelf-partiality, and vicious ſelf-love.

The oppoſite diſpoſition to elation of mind, is depreſſion, which alſo has good or bad effects, according as it is grounded upon true or falſe opinion.

A juſt ſenſe of the weakneſs and imperfections of human nature, and of our own perſonal faults and defects, is true humility. It is *not to think of ourſelves above what we ought to think*; a moſt ſalutary and amiable diſpoſition; of great price in the ſight of GOD and man. Nor is it inconſiſtent with real magnanimity and greatneſs of ſoul. They may dwell together with great advantage and ornament to both, and be faithful monitors againſt the extremes to which each has the greateſt tendency.

But there is a depreſſion of mind which is the oppoſite to magnanimity, which debilitates the ſprings of action, and freezes every ſentiment that ſhould lead to any noble exertion or enterpriſe.

Suppoſe a man to have no belief of a good adminiſtration of the world, no conception of the dignity of virtue, no hope of happineſs in another ſtate. Suppoſe him, at the ſame time, in a ſtate of extreme poverty and dependence, and that he has no higher aim than to ſupply his bodily wants, or to miniſter to the pleaſure, or flatter the pride of ſome being as worthleſs as himſelf. Is not the ſoul of ſuch a man depreſſed as much as his body

body or his fortune? And, if fortune ſhould ſmile upon him while he retains the ſame ſentiments, he is only the ſlave of fortune. His mind is depreſſed to the ſtate of a brute; and his human faculties ſerve only to make him feel that depreſſion.

Depreſſion of mind may be owing to melancholy, a diſtemper of mind which proceeds from the ſtate of the body, which throws a diſmal gloom upon every object of thought, cuts all the ſinews of action, and often gives riſe to ſtrange and abſurd opinions in religion, or in other intereſting matters. Yet, where there is real worth at bottom, ſome rays of it will break forth even in this depreſſed ſtate of mind.

A remarkable inſtance of this was exhibited in Mr SIMON BROWN, a diſſenting clergyman in England, who, by melancholy, was led into the belief that his rational ſoul had gradually decayed within him, and at laſt was totally extinct. From this belief he gave up his miniſterial function, and would not even join with others in any act of worſhip, conceiving it to be a profanation to worſhip GOD without a ſoul.

In this diſmal ſtate of mind, he wrote an excellent defence of the Chriſtian religion, againſt TINDAL's *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation*. To the book he prefixed an epiſtle dedicatory to Queen CAROLINE, wherein he mentions, "That he was once a "man, but, by the immediate hand of GOD, for his ſins, his "very thinking ſubſtance has, for more than ſeven years, been "continually waſting away, till it is wholly periſhed out of "him, if it be not utterly come to nothing." And, having heard of her Majeſty's eminent piety, he begs the aid of her prayers.

The book was publiſhed after his death without the dedication, which, however, having been preſerved in manuſcript, was afterwards printed in the Adventurer, No. 88.

Thus

CHAP. VII.

Thus this good man, when he believed that he had no ſoul, ſhewed a moſt generous and diſintereſted concern for thoſe who had ſouls.

As depreſſion of mind may produce ſtrange opinions, eſpecially in the caſe of melancholy, ſo our opinions may have a very conſiderable influence, either to elevate or to depreſs the mind, even where there is no melancholy.

Suppoſe, on one hand, a man who believes that he is deſtined to an eternal exiſtence; that he who made, and who governs the world, maketh account of him, and hath furniſhed him with the means of attaining a high degree of perfection and glory. With this man compare, on the other hand, the man who believes nothing at all, or who believes that his exiſtence is only the play of atoms, and that, after he hath been toſſed about by blind fortune for a few years, he ſhall again return to nothing: Can it be doubted, that the former opinion leads to elevation and greatneſs of mind, the latter to meanneſs and depreſſion?

CHAP. VIII.

Of Opinion.

WHEN we come to explain the rational principles of action, it will appear, that opinion is an eſſential ingredient in them. Here we are only to conſider its influence upon the animal principles. Some of thoſe I have ranked in that claſs cannot, I think, exiſt in the human mind without it.

Gratitude ſuppoſes the opinion of a favour done or intended; reſentment the opinion of an injury; eſteem the opinion of merit; the paſſion of love ſuppoſes the opinion of uncommon merit and perfection in its object.

Although

Although natural affection to parents, children, and near relations, is not grounded on the opinion of their merit, it is much increaſed by that conſideration. So is every benevolent affection. On the contrary, real malevolence can hardly exiſt without the opinion of demerit in the object.

There is no natural deſire or averſion, which may not be reſtrained by opinion. Thus, if a man were athirſt, and had a ſtrong deſire to drink, the opinion that there was poiſon in the cup would make him forbear.

It is evident, that hope and fear, which every natural deſire or affection may create, depend upon the opinion of future good or ill.

Thus it appears, that our paſſions, our diſpoſitions, and our opinions, have great influence upon our animal principles, to ſtrengthen or weaken, to excite or reſtrain them; and, by that means, have great influence upon human actions and characters.

That brute-animals have both paſſions and diſpoſitions ſimilar, in many reſpects, to thoſe of men, cannot be doubted. Whether they have opinions, is not ſo clear. I think they have not, in the proper ſenſe of the word. But, waving all diſpute upon this point, it will be granted, that opinion in men has a much wider field than in brutes. No man will ſay, that they have ſyſtems of theology, morals, juriſprudence or politics; or that they can reaſon from the laws of nature, in mechanics, medicine, or agriculture.

They feel the evils or enjoyments that are preſent; probably they imagine thoſe which experience has aſſociated with what they feel. But they can take no large proſpect either of the paſt or of the future, nor ſee through a train of conſequences.

CHAP. VIII.

A dog may be deterred from eating what is before him, by the fear of immediate puniſhment, which he has felt on like occaſions; but he is never deterred by the conſideration of health, or of any diſtant good.

I have been credibly informed, that a monkey, having once been intoxicated with ſtrong drink, in conſequence of which it burnt its foot in the fire, and had a ſevere fit of ſickneſs, could never after be induced to drink any thing but pure water. I believe this is the utmoſt pitch which the faculties of brutes can reach.

From the influence of opinion upon the conduct of mankind we may learn, that it is one of the chief inſtruments to be uſed in the diſcipline and government of men.

All men, in the early part of life, muſt be under the diſcipline and government of parents and tutors. Men, who live in ſociety, muſt be under the government of laws and magiſtrates, through life. The government of men is undoubtedly one of the nobleſt exertions of human power. And it is of great importance, that thoſe who have any ſhare, either in domeſtic or civil government, ſhould know the nature of man, and how he is to be trained and governed.

Of all inſtruments of government, opinion is the ſweeteſt, and the moſt agreeable to the nature of man. Obedience that flows from opinion, is real freedom, which every man deſires. That which is extorted by fear of puniſhment, is ſlavery; a yoke which is always galling, and which every man will ſhake off when it is in his power.

The opinions of the bulk of mankind have always been, and will always be, what they are taught by thoſe whom they eſteem

to

to be wiſe and good; and, therefore, in a conſiderable degree, are in the power of thoſe who govern them. CHAP. VIII.

Man, uncorrupted by bad habits and bad opinions, is of all animals the moſt tractable; corrupted by theſe, he is of all animals the moſt untractable.

I apprehend, therefore, that, if ever civil government ſhall be brought to perfection, it muſt be the principal care of the ſtate to make good citizens by proper education, and proper inſtruction and diſcipline.

The moſt uſeful part of medicine is that which ſtrengthens the conſtitution, and prevents diſeaſes by good regimen; the reſt is ſomewhat like propping a ruinous fabric at great expence, and to little purpoſe. The art of government is the medicine of the mind, and the moſt uſeful part of it is that which prevents crimes and bad habits, and trains men to virtue and good habits, by proper education and diſcipline.

The end of government is to make the ſociety happy, which can only be done by making it good and virtuous.

That men in general will be good or bad members of ſociety, according to the education and diſcipline by which they have been trained, experience may convince us.

The preſent age has made great advances in the art of training men to military duty. It will not be ſaid, that thoſe who enter into that ſervice are more tractable than their fellow-ſubjects of other profeſſions. And I know not why it ſhould be thought impoſſible to train men to equal perfection in the other duties of good citizens.

What an immenſe difference is there, for the purpoſe of war,

CHAP. VIII.

between an army properly trained, and a militia haſtily drawn out of the multitude? What ſhould hinder us from thinking, that, for every purpoſe of civil government, there may be a like difference between a civil ſociety properly trained to virtue, good habits and right ſentiments, and thoſe civil ſocieties which we now behold? But I fear I ſhall be thought to digreſs from my ſubject into Utopian ſpeculation.

To make an end of what I have to ſay upon the animal principles of action, we may take a complex view of their effect in life, by ſuppoſing a being actuated by principles of no higher order, to have no conſcience or ſenſe of duty, only let us allow him that ſuperiority of underſtanding, and that power of ſelf-government which man actually has. Let us ſpeculate a little upon this imaginary being, and conſider what conduct and tenor of action might be expected from him.

It is evident he would be a very different animal from a brute, and perhaps not very different, in appearance, from what a great part of mankind is.

He would be capable of conſidering the diſtant conſequences of his actions, and of reſtraining or indulging his appetites, deſires and affections, from the conſideration of diſtant good or evil.

He would be capable of chuſing ſome main end of his life, and planning ſuch a rule of conduct as appeared moſt ſubſervient to it. Of this we have reaſon to think no brute is capable.

We can perhaps conceive ſuch a balance of the animal principles of action, as, with very little ſelf-government, might make a man to be a good member of ſociety, a good companion, and to have many amiable qualities.

The

The balance of our animal principles, I think, conſtitutes what we call a man's *natural temper*; which may be good or bad, without regard to his virtue.

A man in whom the benevolent affections, the deſire of eſteem and good humour are naturally prevalent, who is of a calm and diſpaſſionate nature, who has the good fortune to live with good men, and aſſociate with good companions, may behave properly with little effort.

His natural temper leads him, in moſt caſes, to do what virtue requires. And if he happens not to be expoſed to thoſe trying ſituations, in which virtue croſſes the natural bent of his temper, he has no great temptation to act amiſs.

But perhaps a happy natural temper, joined with ſuch a happy ſituation, is more ideal than real, though no doubt ſome men make nearer approaches to it than others.

The temper and the ſituation of men is commonly ſuch, that the animal principles alone, without ſelf-government, would never produce any regular and conſiſtent train of conduct.

One principle croſſes another. Without ſelf-government, that which is ſtrongeſt at the time will prevail. And that which is weakeſt at one time may, from paſſion, from a change of diſpoſition or of fortune, become ſtrongeſt at another time.

Every natural appetite, deſire and affection, has its own preſent gratification only in view. A man, therefore, who has no other leader than theſe, would be like a ſhip in the ocean without hands, which cannot be ſaid to be deſtined to any port. He would have no character at all, but be benevolent or ſpiteful, pleaſant or moroſe, honeſt or diſhoneſt, as the preſent wind of paſſion or tide of humour moved him.

CHAP. VIII. Every man who purſues an end, be it good or bad, muſt be active when he is diſpoſed to be indolent; he muſt rein every paſſion and appetite that would lead him out of his road.

Mortification and ſelf-denial are found not in the path of virtue only, they are common to every road that leads to an end, be it ambition, or avarice, or even pleaſure itſelf. Every man who maintains an uniform and conſiſtent character, muſt ſweat and toil, and often ſtruggle with his preſent inclination.

Yet thoſe who ſteadily purſue ſome end in life, though they muſt often reſtrain their ſtrongeſt deſires, and practiſe much ſelf-denial, have, upon the whole, more enjoyment than thoſe who have no end at all, but to gratify the preſent prevailing inclination.

A dog that is made for the chaſe, cannot enjoy the happineſs of a dog without that exerciſe. Keep him within doors, feed him with the moſt delicious fare, give him all the pleaſures his nature is capable of, he ſoon becomes a dull, torpid, unhappy animal. No enjoyment can ſupply the want of that employment which nature has made his chief good. Let him hunt, and neither pain nor hunger nor fatigue ſeem to be evils. Deprived of this exerciſe, he can reliſh nothing. Life itſelf becomes burdenſome.

It is no diſparagement to the human kind to ſay, that man, as well as the dog, is made for hunting, and cannot be happy but in ſome vigorous purſuit. He has indeed nobler game to purſue than the dog, but he muſt have ſome purſuit, otherwiſe life ſtagnates, all the faculties are benumbed, the ſpirits flag, and his exiſtence becomes an unſupportable burden.

Even the mere fox-hunter, who has no higher purſuit than his dogs, has more enjoyment than he who has no purſuit at all.

He

He has an end in view, and this invigorates his ſpirits, makes him deſpiſe pleaſure, and bear cold, hunger, and fatigue, as if they were no evils.

Manet ſub Jove frigido
Venator, teneræ conjugis immemor,
Seu viſa eſt catulis cerva fidelibus
Seu rupit teretes marſus aper plagas.

ESSAY III. PART III.

Of the Rational Principles of Action.

CHAP. I.

There are Rational Principles of Action in Man.

MECHANICAL principles of action produce their effect without any will or intention on our part. We may, by a voluntary effort, hinder the effect; but if it be not hindered by will and effort, it is produced without them.

Animal principles of action require intention and will in their operation, but not judgment. They are, by ancient moraliſts, very properly called *cæcæ cupidines*, blind deſires.

Having treated of theſe two claſſes, I proceed to the third, the *rational* principles of action in man; which have that name, becauſe they can have no exiſtence in beings not endowed with reaſon, and, in all their exertions, require, not only intention and will, but judgment or reaſon.

That

CHAP. I.

That talent which we call *reaſon*, by which men that are adult and of a ſound mind, are diſtinguiſhed from brutes, idiots, and infants, has, in all ages, among the learned and unlearned, been conceived to have two offices, to regulate our belief, and to regulate our actions and conduct.

Whatever we believe, we think agreeable to reaſon, and, on that account, yield our aſſent to it. Whatever we diſbelieve, we think contrary to reaſon, and, on that account, diſſent from it. Reaſon therefore is allowed to be the principle by which our belief and opinions ought to be regulated.

But reaſon has been no leſs univerſally conceived to be a principle, by which our actions ought to be regulated.

To act reaſonably, is a phraſe no leſs common in all languages, than to judge reaſonably. We immediately approve of a man's conduct, when it appears that he had good reaſon for what he did. And every action we diſapprove, we think unreaſonable, or contrary to reaſon.

A way of ſpeaking ſo univerſal among men, common to the learned and the unlearned in all nations, and in all languages, muſt have a meaning. To ſuppoſe it to be words without meaning, is to treat, with undue contempt, the common ſenſe of mankind.

Suppoſing this phraſe to have a meaning, we may conſider in what way reaſon may ſerve to regulate human conduct, ſo that ſome actions of men are to be denominated reaſonable, and others unreaſonable.

I take it for granted, that there can be no exerciſe of reaſon without judgment, nor, on the other hand, any judgment of things, abſtract and general, without ſome degree of reaſon.

If

If, therefore, there be any principles of action in the human conſtitution, which, in their nature, neceſſarily imply ſuch judgment, they are the principles which we may call rational, to diſtinguiſh them from animal principles, which imply deſire and will, but not judgment.

Every deliberate human action muſt be done either as the means, or as an end; as the means to ſome end, to which it is ſubſervient, or as an end, for its own ſake, and without regard to any thing beyond it.

That it is a part of the office of reaſon to determine, what are the proper means to any end which we deſire, no man ever denied. But ſome Philoſophers, particularly Mr HUME, think that it is no part of the office of reaſon to determine the ends we ought to purſue, or the preference due to one end above another. This, he thinks, is not the office of reaſon, but of taſte or feeling.

If this be ſo, reaſon cannot, with any propriety, be called a principle of action. Its office can only be to miniſter to the principles of action, by diſcovering the means of their gratification. Accordingly Mr HUME maintains, that reaſon is no principle of action; but that it is, and ought to be, the ſervant of the paſſions.

I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, that, among the various ends of human actions, there are ſome, of which, without reaſon, we could not even form a conception; and that, as ſoon as they are conceived, a regard to them is, by our conſtitution, not only a principle of action, but a leading and governing principle, to which all our animal principles are ſubordinate, and to which they ought to be ſubject.

Theſe I ſhall call *rational* principles; becauſe they can exiſt only

CHAP. I. only in beings endowed with reaſon, and becauſe, to act from theſe principles, is what has always been meant by acting according to reaſon.

The ends of human actions I have in view, are two, to wit, What is good for us upon the whole, and what appears to be our duty. They are very ſtrictly connected, lead to the ſame courſe of conduct, and co-operate with each other; and, on that account, have commonly been comprehended under one name, that of *reaſon*. But as they may be disjoined, and are really diſtinct principles of action, I ſhall conſider them ſeparately.

CHAP. II.

Of Regard to our Good on the Whole.

IT will not be denied that man, when he comes to years of underſtanding, is led by his rational nature, to form the conception of what is good for him upon the whole.

How early in life this general notion of good enters into the mind, I cannot pretend to determine. It is one of the moſt general and abſtract notions we form.

Whatever makes a man more happy, or more perfect, is good, and is an object of deſire as ſoon as we are capable of forming the conception of it. The contrary is ill, and is an object of averſion.

In the firſt part of life we have many enjoyments of various kinds; but very ſimilar to thoſe of brute-animals.

They conſiſt in the exerciſe of our ſenſes and powers of motion,

tion, the gratification of our appetites, and the exertions of our kind affections. Theſe are chequered with many evils of pain, and fear, and diſappointment, and ſympathy with the ſufferings of others.

But the goods and evils of this period of life are of ſhort duration, and ſoon forgot. The mind being regardleſs of the paſt, and unconcerned about the future, we have then no other meaſure of good but the preſent deſire; no other meaſure of evil but the preſent averſion.

Every animal deſire has ſome particular and preſent object, and looks not beyond that object to its conſequences, or to the connections it may have with other things.

The preſent object, which is moſt attractive, or excites the ſtrongeſt deſire, determines the choice, whatever be its conſequences. The preſent evil that preſſes moſt, is avoided, though it ſhould be the road to a greater good to come, or the only way to eſcape a greater evil. This is the way in which brutes act, and the way in which men muſt act, till they come to the uſe of reaſon.

As we grow up to underſtanding, we extend our view both forward and backward. We reflect upon what is paſt, and, by the lamp of experience, diſcern what will probably happen in time to come. We find that many things which we eagerly deſired, were too dearly purchaſed, and that things grievous for the preſent, like nauſeous medicines, may be ſalutary in the iſſue.

We learn to obſerve the connections of things, and the conſequences of our actions; and, taking an extended view of our exiſtence, paſt, preſent, and future, we correct our firſt notions of good and ill, and form the conception of what is good or ill upon the whole; which muſt be eſtimated, not from the preſent

CHAP. II. feeling, or from the preſent animal deſire or averſion, but from a due conſideration of its conſequences, certain or probable, during the whole of our exiſtence.

That which, taken with all its diſcoverable connections and conſequences, brings more good than ill, I call *good upon the whole*.

That brute-animals have any conception of this good, I ſee no reaſon to believe. And it is evident, that man cannot have the conception of it, till reaſon is ſo far advanced, that he can ſeriouſly reflect upon the paſt, and take a proſpect of the future part of his exiſtence.

It appears therefore, that the very conception of what is good or ill for us upon the whole, is the offſpring of reaſon, and can be only in beings endowed with reaſon. And if this conception give riſe to any principle of action in man, which he had not before, that principle may very properly be called a rational principle of action.

I pretend not in this to ſay any thing that is new, but what reaſon ſuggeſted to thoſe who firſt turned their attention to the philoſophy of morals. I beg leave to quote one paſſage from CICERO, in his firſt book of *Offices*; wherein, with his uſual elegance, he expreſſes the ſubſtance of what I have ſaid. And there is good reaſon to think that CICERO borrowed it from PANÆTIUS, a Greek Philoſopher, whoſe books of Offices are loſt.

" Sed inter hominem et belluam hoc maxime intereſt, quod
" hæc tantum quantum ſenſu movetur, ad id ſolum quod adeſt,
" quodque præſens eſt ſe accommodat, paululum admodum ſen-
" tiens præteritum aut futurum: Homo autem quoniam rationis
" eſt particeps, per quam conſequentia cernit, cauſas rerum videt,
" earumque prægreſſus et quaſi anteceſſiones non ignorat; ſimi-
" litudines comparat, et rebus præſentibus adjungit atque an-
" nectit

" nectit futuras; facile totius vitæ curſum videt ad eamque de-
" gen[redacted]preparat res neceſſarias."

I obſerve, in the *next* place, That as ſoon as we have the conception of what is good or ill for us upon the whole, we are led, by our conſtitution, to ſeek the good and avoid the ill; and this becomes not only a principle of action, but a leading or governing principle, to which all our animal principles ought to be ſubordinate.

I am very apt to think, with Dr PRICE, that, in intelligent beings, the deſire of what is good, and averſion to what is ill, is neceſſarily connected with the intelligent nature; and that it is a contradiction to ſuppoſe ſuch a being to have the notion of good without the deſire of it, or the notion of ill without averſion to it. Perhaps there may be other neceſſary connections between underſtanding and the beſt principles of action, which our faculties are too weak to diſcern. That they are neceſſarily connected in him who is perfect in underſtanding, we have good reaſon to believe.

To prefer a greater good, though diſtant, to a leſs that is preſent; to chuſe a preſent evil, in order to avoid a greater evil, or to obtain a greater good, is, in the judgment of all men, wiſe and reaſonable conduct; and, when a man acts the contrary part, all men will acknowledge, that he acts fooliſhly and unreaſonably. Nor will it be denied, that, in innumerable caſes in common life, our animal principles draw us one way, while a regard to what is good on the whole, draws us the contrary way. Thus the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe two are contrary. That in every conflict of this kind the rational principle ought to prevail, and the animal to be ſubordinate, is too evident to need, or to admit of proof.

Thus, I think, it appears, that to purſue what is good up-

CHAP. II. on the whole, and to avoid what is ill upon the whole, is a rational principle of action, grounded upon our constitution as reaſonable creatures.

It appears that it is not without juſt cauſe, that this principle of action has in all ages been called *reaſon*, in oppoſition to our animal principles, which in common language are called by the general name of the *paſſions*.

The firſt not only operates in a calm and cool manner, like reaſon, but implies real judgment in all its operations. The ſecond, to wit, the paſſions, are blind deſires of ſome particular object, without any judgment or conſideration, whether it be good for us upon the whole, or ill.

It appears alſo, that the fundamental maxim of prudence, and of all good morals, That the paſſions ought, in all caſes, to be under the dominion of reaſon, is not only ſelf-evident, when rightly underſtood, but is expreſſed according to the common uſe and propriety of language.

The contrary maxim maintained by Mr HUME, can only be defended by a groſs and palpable abuſe of words. For, in order to defend it, he muſt include under the *paſſions*, that very principle which has always, in all languages, been called *reaſon*, and never was, in any language, called a *paſſion*. And from the meaning of the word *reaſon* he muſt exclude the moſt important part of it, by which we are able to diſcern and to purſue what appears to be good upon the whole. And thus, including the moſt important part of reaſon under paſſion, and making the leaſt important part of reaſon to be the whole, he defends his favourite paradox, That reaſon is, and ought to be, the ſervant of the paſſions.

To judge of what is true or falſe in ſpeculative points, is the office

office of ſpeculative reaſon; and to judge of what is good or ill for us upon the whole, is the office of practical reaſon. Of true and falſe there are no degrees; but of good and ill there are many degrees, and many kinds; and men are very apt to form erroneous opinions concerning them; miſled by their paſſions, by the authority of the multitude, and by other cauſes. CHAP. II.

Wiſe men, in all ages, have reckoned it a chief point of wiſdom, to make a right eſtimate of the goods and evils of life. They have laboured to diſcover the errors of the multitude on this important point, and to warn others againſt them.

The ancient moraliſts, though divided into ſects, all agreed in this, That opinion has a mighty influence upon what we commonly account the goods and ills of life, to alleviate or to aggravate them.

The Stoics carried this ſo far, as to conclude that they all depend on opinion. Πάντα Ὑπόληψις was a favourite maxim with them.

We ſee, indeed, that the ſame ſtation or condition of life, which makes one man happy, makes another miſerable, and to a third is perfectly indifferent. We ſee men miſerable through life, from vain fears, and anxious deſires, grounded ſolely upon wrong opinions. We ſee men wear themſelves out with toilſome days, and ſleepleſs nights, in purſuit of ſome object which they never attain; or which, when attained, gives little ſatisfaction, perhaps real diſguſt.

The evils of life, which every man muſt feel, have a very different effect upon different men. What ſinks one into deſpair and abſolute miſery, rouſes the virtue and magnanimity of another, who bears it as the lot of humanity, and as the diſcipline of

CHAP. II.

of a wife and merciful father in heaven. He rifes ſuperior to adverſity, and is made wiſer and better by it, and conſequently happier.

It is therefore of the laſt importance, in the conduct of life, to have juſt opinions with reſpect to good and evil; and ſurely it is the province of reaſon to correct wrong opinions, and to lead us into thoſe that are juſt and true.

It is true indeed, that men's paſſions and appetites, too often, draw them to act contrary to their cool judgment and opinion of what is beſt for them. *Video meliora proboque, deteriora ſequor*, is the caſe in every wilful deviation from our true intereſt and our duty.

When this is the caſe, the man is ſelf-condemned, he ſees that he acted the part of a brute, when he ought to have acted the part of a man. He is convinced that reaſon ought to have reſtrained his paſſion, and not to have given the rein to it.

When he feels the bad effects of his conduct, he imputes them to himſelf, and would be ſtung with remorſe for his folly, though he had no account to make to a ſuperior being. He has ſinned againſt himſelf, and brought upon his own head the puniſhment which his folly deſerved.

From this we may ſee, that this rational principle of a regard to our good upon the whole, gives us the conception of a *right* and a *wrong* in human conduct, at leaſt of a *wiſe* and a *fooliſh*. It produces a kind of ſelf-approbation, when the paſſions and appetites are kept in their due ſubjection to it; and a kind of remorſe and compunction, when it yields to them.

In theſe reſpects, this principle is ſo ſimilar to the moral principle,

ciple, or conſcience, and ſo interwoven with it, that both are commonly comprehended under the name of *reaſon*. This ſimilarity led many of the ancient Philoſophers, and ſome among the moderns, to reſolve conſcience, or a ſenſe of duty, entirely into a regard to what is good for us upon the whole.

That they are diſtinct principles of action, though both lead to the ſame conduct in life, I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew, when I come to treat of *conſcience*.

CHAP. III.

The Tendency of this Principle.

IT has been the opinion of the wiſeſt men, in all ages, that this principle, of a regard to our good upon the whole, in a man duly enlightened, leads to the practice of every virtue.

This was acknowledged, even by EPICURUS; and the beſt moraliſts among the ancients derived all the virtues from this principle. For, among them, the whole of morals was reduced to this queſtion, What is the greateſt good? Or what courſe of conduct is beſt for us upon the whole?

In order to reſolve this queſtion, they divided goods into three claſſes, the goods of the body; the goods of fortune, or external goods, and the goods of the mind; meaning, by the laſt, wiſdom and virtue.

Comparing theſe different claſſes of goods, they ſhewed, with convincing evidence, that the goods of the mind are, in many reſpects, ſuperior to thoſe of the body and of fortune, not only as they have more dignity, are more durable, and leſs expoſed

to

CHAP. III. to the ſtrokes of fortune, but chiefly as they are the only goods in our power, and which depend wholly on our conduct.

EPICURUS himſelf maintained, that the wiſe man may be happy in the tranquillity of his mind, even when racked with pain, and ſtruggling with adverſity.

They obſerved very juſtly, that the goods of fortune, and even thoſe of the body, depend much on opinion; and that, when our opinion of them is duly corrected by reaſon, we ſhall find them of ſmall value in themſelves.

How can he be happy who places his happineſs in things which it is not in his power to attain, or in things from which, when attained, a fit of ſickneſs, or a ſtroke of fortune, may tear him aſunder.

The value we put upon things, and our uneaſineſs in the want of them, depend upon the ſtrength of our deſires; correct the deſire, and the uneaſineſs ceaſes.

The fear of the evils of body and of fortune, is often a greater evil than the things we fear. As the wiſe man moderates his deſires by temperance, ſo, to real or imaginary dangers, he oppoſes the ſhield of fortitude and magnanimity, which raiſes him above himſelf, and makes him happy and triumphant in thoſe moments wherein others are moſt miſerable.

Theſe oracles of reaſon led the Stoics ſo far as to maintain, That all deſires and fears, with regard to things not in our power, ought to be totally eradicated; that virtue is the only good; that what we call the goods of the body and of fortune, are really things indifferent, which may, according to circumſtances, prove good or ill, and therefore have no intrinſic goodneſs in themſelves; that our ſole buſineſs ought to be, to act our

our part well, and to do what is right, without the leaſt concern about things not in our power, which we ought, with perfect acquieſcence, to leave to the care of him who governs the world.

This noble and elevated conception of human wiſdom and duty was taught by SOCRATES, free from the extravagancies which the Stoics afterwards joined with it. We ſee it in the Alcibiades of PLATO; from which JUVENAL hath taken it in his tenth ſatire, and adorned it with the graces of poetry.

Omnibus in terris quæ ſunt a gadibus uſque
Auroram et Gangen, pauci dignoſcere poſſunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diverſa, remotâ
Erroris nebulâ. Quid enim ratione timemus?
Aut cupimus? Quid tam dextera pede concupis ut te
Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti?
Nil ergo optabunt homines? Si concilium vis,
Permittes ipſis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebuſque ſit utile noſtris.
Nam pro jucundis aptiſſima quæque dabunt Dii.
Charior eſt illis homo quam ſibi. Nos animorum
Impulſu, et cæca magnaque cupidine ducti,
Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris; at illis
Notum qui pueri, qualiſque futura ſit uxor.
Fortem poſce animum, et mortis terrore carentem,
Qui ſpatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
Naturæ; qui ferre queat quoſcunque labores,
Neſciat iraſci, cupiat nihil, et potiores
HERCULIS ærumnas credat, ſævoſque labores
Et venere, et cœnis, et plumis, SARDANAPALI.
Monſtro quid ipſe tibi poſſis dare. Semita certe
Tranquillæ per virtutem patet unica vitæ.
Nullum numen abeſt ſi ſit prudentia; ſed te
Nos facimus fortuna Deam, cœloque locamus.

CHAP. III. Even HORACE, in his ſerious moments, falls into this ſyſtem.

Nil admirari, prope res eſt una Numici,
Solaque quæ poſſit facere et ſervare beatum.

We cannot but admire the Stoical ſyſtem of morals, even when we think that, in ſome points, it went beyond the pitch of human nature. The virtue, the temperance, the fortitude and magnanimity of ſome who ſincerely embraced it, amidſt all the flattery of ſovereign power and the luxury of a court, will be everlaſting monuments to the honour of that ſyſtem, and to the honour of human nature.

That a due regard to what is beſt for us upon the whole, in an enlightened mind, leads to the practice of every virtue, may be argued from conſidering what we think beſt for thoſe for whom we have the ſtrongeſt affection, and whoſe good we tender as our own. In judging for ourſelves, our paſſions and appetites are apt to bias our judgment; but when we judge for others, this bias is removed, and we judge impartially.

What is it then that a wiſe man would wiſh as the greateſt good to a brother, a ſon, or a friend?

Is it that he may ſpend his life in a conſtant round of the pleaſures of ſenſe, and fare ſumptuouſly every day?

No, ſurely; we wiſh him to be a man of real virtue and worth. We may wiſh for him an honourable ſtation in life; but only with this condition, that he acquit himſelf honourably in it, and acquire juſt reputation, by being uſeful to his country and to mankind. We would a thouſand times rather wiſh him honourably to undergo the labours of HERCULES, than to diſſolve in pleaſure with SARDANAPALUS.

Such

Such would be the wiſh of every man of underſtanding for the friend whom he loves as his own ſoul. Such things, therefore, he judges to be beſt for him upon the whole; and if he judges otherwiſe for himſelf, it is only becauſe his judgment is perverted by animal paſſions and deſires.

The ſum of what has been ſaid in theſe three chapters amounts to this:

There is a principle of action in men that are adult and of a ſound mind, which, in all ages, has been called *reaſon*, and ſet in oppoſition to the animal principles which we call the *paſſions*. The ultimate object of this principle is what we judge to be good upon the whole. This is not the object of any of our animal principles, they being all directed to particular objects, without any compariſon with others, or any conſideration of their being good or ill upon the whole.

What is good upon the whole cannot even be conceived without the exerciſe of reaſon, and therefore cannot be an object to beings that have not ſome degree of reaſon.

As ſoon as we have the conception of this object, we are led, by our conſtitution, to deſire and purſue it. It juſtly claims a preference to all objects of purſuit that can come in competition with it. In preferring it to any gratification that oppoſes it, or in ſubmitting to any pain or mortification which it requires, we act according to reaſon; and every ſuch action is accompanied with ſelf-approbation and the approbation of mankind. The contrary actions are accompanied with ſhame and ſelf-condemnation in the agent, and with contempt in the ſpectator, as fooliſh and unreaſonable.

The right application of this principle to our conduct requires an extenſive proſpect of human life, and a correct judg-

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ment and eſtimate of its goods and evils, with reſpect to their intrinſic worth and dignity, their conſtancy and duration, and their attainableneſs. He muſt be a wiſe man indeed, if any ſuch man there be, who can perceive, in every inſtance, or even in every important inſtance, what is beſt for him upon the whole, if he have no other rule to direct his conduct.

However, according to the beſt judgment which wiſe men have been able to form, this principle leads to the practice of every virtue. It leads directly to the virtues of prudence, temperance and fortitude. And, when we conſider ourſelves as ſocial creatures, whoſe happineſs or miſery is very much connected with that of our fellow-men; when we conſider, that there are many benevolent affections planted in our conſtitution, whoſe exertions make a capital part of our good and enjoyment; from theſe conſiderations, this principle leads us alſo, though more indirectly, to the practice of juſtice, humanity, and all the ſocial virtues.

It is true, that a regard to our own good cannot, of itſelf, produce any benevolent affection. But, if ſuch affections be a part of our conſtitution, and if the exerciſe of them make a capital part of our happineſs, a regard to our own good ought to lead us to cultivate and exerciſe them, as every benevolent affection makes the good of others to be our own.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Defects of this Principle.

HAVING explained the nature of this principle of action, and ſhewn in general the tenor of conduct to which it leads, I ſhall conclude what relates to it, by pointing out ſome of its defects, if it be ſuppoſed, as it has been by ſome Philoſophers, to be the only regulating principle of human conduct.

Upon that ſuppoſition, it would neither be a ſufficiently plain rule of conduct, nor would it raiſe the human character to that degree of perfection of which it is capable, nor would it yield ſo much real happineſs as when it is joined with another rational principle of action, to wit, a diſintereſted regard to duty.

Firſt, I apprehend the greater part of mankind can never attain ſuch extenſive views of human life, and ſo correct a judgment of good and ill, as the right application of this principle requires.

The authority of the poet before quoted is of weight in this point. " Pauci dignoſcere poſſunt vera bona, remotâ erroris ne-" bulâ." The ignorance of the bulk of mankind concurs with the ſtrength of their paſſions to lead them into error in this moſt important point.

Every man, in his calm moments, wiſhes to know what is beſt for him on the whole, and to do it. But the difficulty of diſcovering it clearly, amidſt ſuch variety of opinions and the importunity of preſent deſires, tempt men to give over the ſearch, and to yield to the preſent inclination.

Though

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Though Philoſophers and moraliſts have taken much laudable pains to correct the errors of mankind in this great point, their inſtructions are known to few; they have little influence upon the greater part of thoſe to whom they are known, and ſometimes little even upon the Philoſopher himſelf.

Speculative diſcoveries gradually ſpread from the knowing to the ignorant, and diffuſe themſelves over all, ſo that, with regard to them, the world, it may be hoped, will ſtill be growing wiſer. But the errors of men, with regard to what is truly good or ill, after being diſcovered and refuted in every age, are ſtill prevalent.

Men ſtand in need of a ſharper monitor to their duty than a dubious view of diſtant good. There is reaſon to believe, that a preſent ſenſe of duty has, in many caſes, a ſtronger influence than the apprehenſion of diſtant good would have of itſelf. And it cannot be doubted, that a ſenſe of guilt and demerit is a more pungent reprover than the bare apprehenſion of having miſtaken our true intereſt.

The brave ſoldier, in expoſing himſelf to danger and death, is animated, not by a cold computation of the good and the ill, but by a noble and elevated ſenſe of military duty.

A Philoſopher ſhews, by a copious and juſt induction, what is our real good and what our ill. But this kind of reaſoning is not eaſily apprehended by the bulk of men. It has too little force upon their minds to reſiſt the ſophiſtry of the paſſions. They are apt to think, that if ſuch rules be good in the general, they may admit of particular exceptions, and that what is good for the greater part, may, to ſome perſons, on account of particular circumſtances, be ill.

Thus, I apprehend, that, if we had no plainer rule to direct our

our conduct in life than a regard to our greateſt good, the greateſt part of mankind would be fatally miſled, even by ignorance of the road to it.

Secondly, Though a ſteady purſuit of our own real good may, in an enlightened mind, produce a kind of virtue which is entitled to ſome degree of approbation, yet it can never produce the nobleſt kind of virtue, which claims our higheſt love and eſteem.

We account him a wiſe man who is wiſe for himſelf; and, if he proſecutes this end through difficulties and temptations that lie in his way, his character is far ſuperior to that of the man who, having the ſame end in view, is continually ſtarting out of the road to it, from an attachment to his appetites and paſſions, and doing every day what he knows he ſhall heartily repent.

Yet, after all, this wiſe man, whoſe thoughts and cares are all centered ultimately in himſelf, who indulges even his ſocial affections only with a view to his own good, is not the man whom we cordially love and eſteem.

Like a cunning merchant, he carries his goods to the beſt market, and watches every opportunity of putting them off to the beſt account. He does well and wiſely. But it is for himſelf. We owe him nothing upon this account. Even when he does good to others, he means only to ſerve himſelf; and therefore has no juſt claim to their gratitude or affection.

This ſurely, if it be virtue, is not the nobleſt kind, but a low and mercenary ſpecies of it. It can neither give a noble elevation to the mind that poſſeſſes it, nor attract the eſteem and love of others.

Our cordial love and eſteem is due only to the man whoſe ſoul

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ſoul is not contracted within itſelf, but embraces a more extenſive object: who loves virtue, not for her dowry only, but for her own ſake: whoſe benevolence is not ſelfiſh, but generous and diſintereſted: who, forgetful of himſelf, has the common good at heart, not as the means only, but as the end: who abhors what is baſe, though he were to be a gainer by it, and loves that which is right, although he ſhould ſuffer by it.

Such a man we eſteem the perfect man, compared with whom, he who has no other aim but good to himſelf, is a mean and deſpicable character.

Diſintereſted goodneſs and rectitude, is the glory of the Divine Nature, without which he might be an object of fear or hope, but not of true devotion. And it is the image of this divine attribute in the human character, that is the glory of man.

To ſerve GOD and be uſeful to mankind, without any concern about our own good and happineſs, is, I believe, beyond the pitch of human nature. But to ſerve GOD and be uſeful to men, merely to obtain good to ourſelves, or to avoid ill, is ſervility, and not that liberal ſervice which true devotion and real virtue require.

Thirdly, Though one might be apt to think, that he has the beſt chance for happineſs, who has no other end of his deliberate actions but his own good; yet a little conſideration may ſatisfy us of the contrary.

A concern for our own good is not a principle that, of itſelf, gives any enjoyment. On the contrary, it is apt to fill the mind with fear, and care, and anxiety. And theſe concomitants of this principle, often give pain and uneaſineſs, that overbalance the good they have in view.

We

We may here compare, in point of preſent happineſs, two imaginary characters; the firſt, of the man who has no other ultimate end of his deliberate actions but his own good; and who has no regard to virtue or duty, but as the means to that end. The ſecond character is that of the man who is not indifferent with regard to his own good, but has another ultimate end perfectly conſiſtent with it, to wit a diſintereſted love of virtue, for its own ſake, or a regard to duty as an end.

Comparing theſe two characters in point of happineſs, that we may give all poſſible advantage to the ſelfiſh principle, we ſhall ſuppoſe the man who is actuated ſolely by it, to be ſo far enlightened as to ſee it his intereſt to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in the world, and that he follows the ſame courſe of conduct from the motive of his own good only, which the other does, in a great meaſure, or in ſome meaſure, from a ſenſe of duty and rectitude.

We put the caſe ſo as that the difference between theſe two perſons may be, not in what they do, but in the motive from which they do it: and, I think, there can be no doubt that he who acts from the nobleſt and moſt generous motive, will have moſt happineſs in his conduct.

The one labours only for hire, without any love to the work. The other loves the work, and thinks it the nobleſt and moſt honourable he can be employed in. To the firſt, the mortification and ſelf-denial which the courſe of virtue requires, is a grievous taſk, which he ſubmits to only through neceſſity. To the other it is victory and triumph, in the moſt honourable warfare.

It ought farther to be conſidered, That although wiſe men have concluded that virtue is the only road to happineſs, this

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conclusion is founded chiefly upon the natural respect men have for virtue, and the good or happiness that is intrinsic to it and arises from the love of it. If we suppose a man, as we now do, altogether destitute of this principle, who considered virtue only as the means to another end, there is no reason to think that he would ever take it to be the road to happiness, but would wander for ever seeking this object, where it is not to be found.

The road of duty is so plain, that the man who seeks it, with an upright heart, cannot greatly err from it. But the road to happiness, if that be supposed the only end our nature leads us to pursue, would be found dark and intricate, full of snares and dangers, and therefore not to be trodden without fear, and care, and perplexity.

The happy man therefore, is not he whose happiness is his only care, but he who, with perfect resignation, leaves the care of his happiness to him who made him, while he pursues with ardor the road of his duty.

This gives an elevation to his mind, which is real happiness. Instead of care, and fear, and anxiety, and disappointment, it brings joy and triumph. It gives a relish to every good we enjoy, and brings good out of evil.

And as no man can be indifferent about his happiness, the good man has the consolation to know, that he consults his happiness most effectually, when, without any painful anxiety about future events, he does his duty.

Thus, I think, it appears, That although a regard to our good upon the whole, be a rational principle in man, yet, if it be supposed the only regulating principle of our conduct, it would be a more uncertain rule, it would give far less perfection to the human

human character, and far leſs happineſs, than when joined with another rational principle, to wit, a regard to duty. CHAP. V.

CHAP. V.

Of the Notion of Duty, Rectitude, moral Obligation.

A BEING endowed with the animal principles of action only, may be capable of being trained to certain purpoſes by diſcipline, as we ſee many brute-animals are, but would be altogether incapable of being governed by law.

The ſubject of law muſt have the conception of a general rule of conduct, which, without ſome degree of reaſon, he cannot have. He muſt likewiſe have a ſufficient inducement to obey the law, even when his ſtrongeſt animal deſires draw him the contrary way.

This inducement may be a ſenſe of intereſt, or a ſenſe of duty, or both concurring.

Theſe are the only principles I am able to conceive, which can reaſonably induce a man to regulate all his actions according to a certain general rule or law. They may therefore be juſtly called the *rational* principles of action, ſince they can have no place but in a being endowed with reaſon, and ſince it is by them only, that man is capable either of political or of moral government.

Without them human life would be like a ſhip at ſea without hands, left to be carried by winds and tides as they happen. It belongs to the rational part of our nature to intend a certain port, as the end of the voyage of life; to take the advantage of

CHAP. V. winds and tides when they are favourable, and to bear up againſt them when they are unfavourable.

A ſenſe of intereſt may induce us to do this, when a ſuitable reward is ſet before us. But there is a nobler principle in the conſtitution of man, which, in many caſes, gives a clearer and more certain rule of conduct, than a regard merely to intereſt would give, and a principle, without which man would not be a moral agent.

A man is prudent when he conſults his real intereſt, but he cannot be virtuous, if he has no regard to duty.

I proceed now to conſider this regard to duty as a rational principle of action in man, and as that principle alone by which he is capable either of virtue or vice.

I ſhall firſt offer ſome obſervations with regard to the general notion of duty, and its contrary, or of right and wrong in human conduct, and then conſider how we come to judge and determine certain things in human conduct to be right, and others to be wrong.

With regard to the notion or conception of duty, I take it to be too ſimple to admit of a logical definition.

We can define it only by ſynonymous words or phraſes, or by its properties and neceſſary concomitants, as when we ſay that it is what we ought to do, what is fair and honeſt, what is approvable, what every man profeſſes to be the rule of his conduct, what all men praiſe, and what is in itſelf laudable, though no man ſhould praiſe it.

I obſerve, in the *next* place, That the notion of duty cannot be

be reſolved into that of intereſt, or what is moſt for our happi- CHAP. V.
neſs.

Every man may be ſatisfied of this who attends to his own conceptions, and the language of all mankind ſhews it. When I ſay, this is my intereſt, I mean one thing; when I ſay, it is my duty, I mean another thing. And though the ſame courſe of action, when rightly underſtood, may be both my duty and my intereſt, the conceptions are very different. Both are reaſonable motives to action, but quite diſtinct in their nature.

I preſume it will be granted, that in every man of real worth, there is a principle of honour, a regard to what is honourable or diſhonourable, very diſtinct from a regard to his intereſt. It is folly in a man to diſregard his intereſt, but to do what is diſhonourable is baſeneſs. The firſt may move our pity, or, in ſome caſes, our contempt, but the laſt provokes our indignation.

As theſe two principles are different in their nature, and not reſolvable into one, ſo the principle of honour is evidently ſuperior in dignity to that of intereſt.

No man would allow him to be a man of honour, who ſhould plead his intereſt to juſtify what he acknowledged to be diſhonourable; but to ſacrifice intereſt to honour never coſts a bluſh.

It likewiſe will be allowed by every man of honour, that this principle is not to be reſolved into a regard to our reputation among men, otherwiſe the man of honour would not deſerve to be truſted in the dark. He would have no averſion to lie, or cheat, or play the coward, when he had no dread of being diſcovered.

I take it for granted, therefore, that every man of real honour feels

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feels an abhorrence of certain actions, becauſe they are in themſelves baſe, and feels an obligation to certain other actions, becauſe they are in themſelves what honour requires, and this, independently of any conſideration of intereſt or reputation.

This is an immediate moral obligation. This principle of honour, which is acknowledged by all men who pretend to character, is only another name for what we call a regard to duty, to rectitude, to propriety of conduct. It is a moral obligation which obliges a man to do certain things becauſe they are right, and not to do other things becauſe they are wrong.

Aſk the man of honour, why he thinks himſelf obliged to pay a debt of honour? The very queſtion ſhocks him. To ſuppoſe that he needs any other inducement to do it but the principle of honour, is to ſuppoſe that he has no honour, no worth, and deſerves no eſteem.

There is therefore a principle in man, which, when he acts according to it, gives him a conſciouſneſs of worth, and when he acts contrary to it, a ſenſe of demerit.

From the varieties of education, of faſhion, of prejudices, and of habits, men may differ much in opinion with regard to the extent of this principle, and of what it commands and forbids; but the notion of it, as far as it is carried, is the ſame in all. It is that which gives a man real worth, and is the object of moral approbation.

Men of rank call it *honour*, and too often confine it to certain virtues that are thought moſt eſſential to their rank. The vulgar call it *honeſty*, *probity*, *virtue*, *conſcience*. Philoſophers have given it the names of *the moral ſenſe*, *the moral faculty*, *rectitude*.

The univerſality of this principle in men that are grown up

to

to years of underſtanding and reflection, is evident. The words that expreſs it, the names of the virtues which it commands, and of the vices which it forbids, the *ought* and *ought not* which expreſs its dictates, make an eſſential part of every language. The natural affections of reſpect to worthy characters, of reſentment of injuries, of gratitude for favours, of indignation againſt the worthleſs, are parts of the human conſtitution which ſuppoſe a right and a wrong in conduct. Many tranſactions that are found neceſſary in the rudeſt ſocieties go upon the ſame ſuppoſition. In all teſtimony, in all promiſes, and in all contracts, there is neceſſarily implied a moral obligation on one party, and a truſt in the other, grounded upon this obligation.

The variety of opinions among men in points of morality, is not greater, but, as I apprehend, much leſs than in ſpeculative points; and this variety is as eaſily accounted for, from the common cauſes of error, in the one caſe as in the other; ſo that it is not more evident, that there is a real diſtinction between true and falſe, in matters of ſpeculation, than that there is a real diſtinction between right and wrong in human conduct.

Mr HUME's authority, if there were any need of it, is of weight in this matter, becauſe he was not wont to go raſhly into vulgar opinions.

" Thoſe, ſays he, who have denied the reality of moral di-
" ſtinctions, may be ranked among the diſingenuous diſputants
" (who really do not believe the opinions they defend, but engage
" in the controverſy, from affectation, from a ſpirit of oppoſition,
" or from a deſire of ſhewing wit and ingenuity ſuperior to the reſt
" of mankind); nor is it conceivable, that any human creature
" could ever ſeriouſly believe, that all characters and actions
" were alike entitled to the regard and affection of every one.

" Let a man's inſenſibility be ever ſo great, he muſt often be
" touched

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" touched with the images of right and wrong; and let his pre-
" judices be ever ſo obſtinate, he muſt obſerve that others are ſuſ-
" ceptible of like impreſſions. The only way, therefore, of con-
" vincing an antagoniſt of this kind is to leave him to himſelf.
" For, finding that nobody keeps up the controverſy with him,
" it is probable he will at laſt, of himſelf, from mere wearineſs,
" come over to the ſide of common ſenſe and reaſon."

What we call *right* and *honourable* in human conduct, was, by the ancients, called *honeſtum*, τὸ καλὸν; of which TULLY ſays, " Quod vere dicimus, etiamſi a nullo laudetur, natura eſſe lauda-
" bile."

All the ancient ſects, except the Epicureans, diſtinguiſhed the *honeſtum* from the *utile*, as we diſtinguiſh what is a man's duty from what is his intereſt.

The word *officium*, καθῆκον, extended both to the *honeſtum* and the *utile*: So that every reaſonable action, proceeding either from a ſenſe of duty or a ſenſe of intereſt, was called *officium*. It is defined by CICERO to be, " Id quod cur factum ſit ratio
" probabilis reddi poteſt." We commonly render it by the word *duty*, but it is more extenſive; for the word *duty*, in the Engliſh language, I think, is commonly applied only to what the ancients called *honeſtum*. CICERO, and PANÆTIUS before him, treating of offices, firſt point out thoſe that are grounded upon the *honeſtum*, and next thoſe that are grounded upon the *utile*.

The moſt ancient philoſophical ſyſtem concerning the principles of action in the human mind, and, I think, the moſt agreeable to nature, is that which we find in ſome fragments of the ancient Pythagoreans, and which is adopted by PLATO, and explained in ſome of his dialogues.

According to this ſyſtem, there is a leading principle in the ſoul,

ſoul, which, like the ſupreme power in a commonwealth, has authority and right to govern. This leading principle they called *reaſon*. It is that which diſtinguiſhes men that are adult from brutes, idiots and infants. The inferior principles, which are under the authority of the leading principle, are our paſſions and appetites, which we have in common with the brutes. CHAP. V.

CICERO adopts this ſyſtem, and expreſſes it well in few words. "Duplex enim eſt vis animorum atque naturæ. Una pars in "appetitu poſita eſt, quæ hominem huc et illuc rapit, quæ eſt "ὁρμὴ græce, altera in ratione, quæ docet, et explanat quid faci- "endum fugiendumve ſit. Ita fit ut ratio præſit appetitus ob- "temperet."

This diviſion of our active principles can hardly indeed be accounted a diſcovery of philoſophy, becauſe it has been common to the unlearned in all ages of the world, and ſeems to be dictated by the common ſenſe of mankind.

What I would now obſerve concerning this common diviſion of our active powers, is, that the leading principle, which is called *reaſon*, comprehends both a regard to what is right and honourable, and a regard to our happineſs upon the whole.

Although theſe be really two diſtinct principles of action, it is very natural to comprehend them under one name, becauſe both are leading principles, both ſuppoſe the uſe of reaſon, and, when rightly underſtood, both lead to the ſame courſe of life. They are like two fountains whoſe ſtreams unite and run in the ſame channel.

When a man, on one occaſion, conſults his real happineſs in things not inconſiſtent with his duty, though in oppoſition to the ſolicitation of appetite or paſſion; and when, on another occaſion, without any ſelfiſh conſideration, he does what is right

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and honourable, becauſe it is ſo; in both theſe caſes, he acts reaſonably; every man approves of his conduct, and calls it reaſonable, or according to reaſon.

So that, when we ſpeak of reaſon as a principle of action in man, it includes a regard both to the *honeſtum* and to the *utile*. Both are combined under one name; and accordingly the dictates of both, in the Latin tongue, were combined under the name *officium*, and in the Greek under καθῆκον.

If we examine the abſtract notion of duty, or moral obligation, it appears to be neither any real quality of the action conſidered by itſelf, nor of the agent conſidered without reſpect to the action, but a certain relation between the one and the other.

When we ſay a man ought to do ſuch a thing, the *ought*, which expreſſes the moral obligation, has a reſpect, on the one hand, to the perſon who ought, and, on the other, to the action which he ought to do. Thoſe two correlates are eſſential to every moral obligation; take away either, and it has no exiſtence. So that, if we ſeek the place of moral obligation among the categories, it belongs to the category of *relation*.

There are many relations of things, of which we have the moſt diſtinct conception, without being able to define them logically. Equality and proportion are relations between quantities, which every man underſtands, but no man can define.

Moral obligation is a relation of its own kind, which every man underſtands, but is perhaps too ſimple to admit of logical definition. Like all other relations, it may be changed or annihilated by a change in any of the two related things, I mean the agent or the action.

Perhaps

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Perhaps it may not be improper to point out briefly the circumſtances, both in the action and in the agent, which are neceſſary to conſtitute moral obligation. The univerſal agreement of men in theſe, ſhews that they have one and the ſame notion of it.

With regard to the action, it muſt be a voluntary action, or preſtation of the perſon obliged, and not of another. There can be no moral obligation upon a man to be ſix feet high. Nor can I be under a moral obligation that another perſon ſhould do ſuch a thing. His actions muſt be imputed to himſelf, and mine only to me, either for praiſe or blame.

I need hardly mention, that a perſon can be under a moral obligation, only to things within the ſphere of his natural power.

As to the party obliged, it is evident, there can be no moral obligation upon an inanimate thing. To ſpeak of moral obligation upon a ſtone or a tree is ridiculous, becauſe it contradicts every man's notion of moral obligation.

The perſon obliged muſt have underſtanding and will, and ſome degree of active power. He muſt not only have the natural faculty of underſtanding, but the means of knowing his obligation. An invincible ignorance of this deſtroys all moral obligation.

The opinion of the agent in doing the action gives it its moral denomination. If he does a materially good action, without any belief of its being good, but from ſome other principle, it is no good action in him. And if he does it with the belief of its being ill, it is ill in him.

Thus, if a man ſhould give to his neighbour a potion which

CHAP. V. he really believes will poiſon him, but which, in the event, proves ſalutary, and does much good; in moral eſtimation, he is a poiſoner, and not a benefactor.

Theſe qualifications of the action and of the agent, in moral obligation, are ſelf-evident; and the agreement of all men in them ſhows, that all men have the ſame notion and a diſtinct notion of moral obligation.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Senſe of Duty.

WE are next to conſider, how we learn to judge and determine, that this is right, and that is wrong.

The abſtract notion of moral good and ill would be of no uſe to direct our life, if we had not the power of applying it to particular actions, and determining what is morally good, and what is morally ill.

Some Philoſophers, with whom I agree, aſcribe this to an original power or faculty in man, which they call the *moral ſenſe*, the *moral faculty*, *conſcience*. Others think, that our moral ſentiments may be accounted for without ſuppoſing any original ſenſe or faculty appropriated to that purpoſe, and go into very different ſyſtems to account for them.

I am not, at preſent, to take any notice of thoſe ſyſtems, becauſe the opinion firſt mentioned ſeems to me to be the truth, to wit, That, by an original power of the mind, when we come to years of underſtanding and reflection, we not only have the notions

notions of right and wrong in conduct, but perceive certain things to be right, and others to be wrong.

The name of the *moral ſenſe*, though more frequently given to conſcience ſince Lord SHAFTESBURY and Dr HUTCHESON wrote, is not new. The *ſenſus recti et honeſti* is a phraſe not unfrequent among the ancients, neither is the *ſenſe of duty* among us.

It has got this name of *ſenſe*, no doubt, from ſome analogy which it is conceived to bear to the external ſenſes. And if we have juſt notions of the office of the external ſenſes, the analogy is very evident, and I ſee no reaſon to take offence, as ſome have done, at the name of the *moral ſenſe*.

The offence taken at this name ſeems to be owing to this, That Philoſophers have degraded the ſenſes too much, and deprived them of the moſt important part of their office.

We are taught, that, by the ſenſes, we have only certain ideas which we could not have otherwiſe. They are repreſented as powers by which we have ſenſations and ideas, not as powers by which we judge.

This notion of the ſenſes I take to be very lame, and to contradict what nature and accurate reflection teach concerning them.

A man who has totally loſt the ſenſe of ſeeing, may retain very diſtinct notions of the various colours; but he cannot judge of colours, becauſe he has loſt the ſenſe by which alone he could judge. By my eyes I not only have the ideas of a ſquare and a circle, but I perceive this ſurface to be a ſquare, that to be a circle.

By my ear, I not only have the idea of ſounds, loud and ſoft, acute and grave, but I immediately perceive and judge this ſound to

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to be loud, that to be ſoft, this to be acute, that to be grave. Two or more ſynchronous ſounds I perceive to be concordant, others to be diſcordant.

Theſe are judgments of the ſenſes. They have always been called and accounted ſuch, by thoſe whoſe minds are not tinctured by philoſophical theories. They are the immediate teſtimony of nature by our ſenſes; and we are ſo conſtituted by nature, that we muſt receive their teſtimony, for no other reaſon but becauſe it is given by our ſenſes.

In vain do Sceptics endeavour to overturn this evidence by metaphyſical reaſoning. Though we ſhould not be able to anſwer their arguments, we believe our ſenſes ſtill, and reſt our moſt important concerns upon their teſtimony.

If this be a juſt notion of our external ſenſes, as I conceive it is, our moral faculty may, I think, without impropriety, be called the *moral ſenſe*.

In its dignity it is, without doubt, far ſuperior to every other power of the mind; but there is this analogy between it and the external ſenſes, That, as by them we have not only the original conceptions of the various qualities of bodies, but the original judgments that this body has ſuch a quality, that ſuch another; ſo by our moral faculty, we have both the original conceptions of right and wrong in conduct, of merit and demerit, and the original judgments that this conduct is right, that is wrong; that this character has worth, that, demerit.

The teſtimony of our moral faculty, like that of the external ſenſes, is the teſtimony of nature, and we have the ſame reaſon to rely upon it.

The truths immediately teſtified by the external ſenſes are the

firſt

first principles from which we reason, with regard to the material world, and from which all our knowledge of it is deduced. CHAP. VI

The truths immediately teſtified by our moral faculty, are the firſt principles of all moral reaſoning, from which all our knowledge of our duty muſt be deduced.

By moral reaſoning, I underſtand all reaſoning that is brought to prove that ſuch conduct is right, and deſerving of moral approbation, or that it is wrong, or that it is indifferent, and, in itſelf, neither morally good nor ill.

I think, all we can properly call moral judgments are reducible to one or other of theſe, as all human actions, conſidered in a moral view, are either good, or bad, or indifferent.

I know the term *moral reaſoning* is often uſed by good writers in a more extenſive ſenſe; but as the reaſoning I now ſpeak of is of a peculiar kind, diſtinct from all others, and therefore ought to have a diſtinct name, I take the liberty to limit the name of *moral reaſoning* to this kind.

Let it be underſtood therefore, that in the reaſoning I call *moral*, the concluſion always is, That ſomething in the conduct of moral agents is good or bad, in a greater or a leſs degree, or indifferent.

All reaſoning muſt be grounded on firſt principles. This holds in moral reaſoning, as in all other kinds. There muſt therefore be in morals, as in all other ſciences, firſt or ſelf-evident principles, on which all moral reaſoning is grounded, and on which it ultimately reſts. From ſuch ſelf-evident principles, concluſions may be drawn ſynthetically with regard to the moral conduct of life; and particular duties or virtues may be traced back to ſuch principles, analytically. But, without ſuch principles,

CHAP. VI. principles, we can no more eſtabliſh any concluſion in morals, than we can build a caſtle in the air, without any foundation.

An example or two will ſerve to illuſtrate this.

It is a firſt principle in morals, That we ought not to do to another, what we ſhould think wrong to be done to us in like circumſtances. If a man is not capable of perceiving this in his cool moments, when he reflects ſeriouſly, he is not a moral agent, nor is he capable of being convinced of it by reaſoning.

From what topic can you reaſon with ſuch a man? You may poſſibly convince him by reaſoning, that it is his intereſt to obſerve this rule; but this is not to convince him that it is his duty. To reaſon about juſtice with a man who ſees nothing to be juſt or unjuſt; or about benevolence with a man who ſees nothing in benevolence preferable to malice, is like reaſoning with a blind man about colour, or with a deaf man about ſound.

It is a queſtion in morals that admits of reaſoning, Whether, by the law of nature, a man ought to have only one wife?

We reaſon upon this queſtion, by balancing the advantages and diſadvantages to the family, and to ſociety in general, that are naturally conſequent both upon monogamy and polygamy. And if it can be ſhewn that the advantages are greatly upon the ſide of monogamy, we think the point is determined.

But, if a man does not perceive that he ought to regard the good of ſociety, and the good of his wife and children, the reaſoning can have no effect upon him, becauſe he denies the firſt principle upon which it is grounded.

Suppoſe again, that we reaſon for monogamy from the intention

tion of nature, discovered by the proportion of males and of females that are born; a proportion which corresponds perfectly with monogamy, but by no means with polygamy. This argument can have no weight with a man who does not perceive that he ought to have a regard to the intention of nature.

Thus we shall find that all moral reasonings rest upon one or more first principles of morals, whose truth is immediately perceived without reasoning, by all men come to years of understanding.

And this indeed is common to every branch of human knowledge that deserves the name of science. There must be first principles proper to that science, by which the whole superstructure is supported.

The first principles of all the sciences, must be the immediate dictates of our natural faculties; nor is it possible that we should have any other evidence of their truth. And in different sciences the faculties which dictate their first principles are very different.

Thus, in astronomy and in optics, in which such wonderful discoveries have been made, that the unlearned can hardly believe them to be within the reach of human capacity, the first principles are phænomena attested solely by that little organ, the human eye. If we disbelieve its report, the whole of those two noble fabrics of science, falls to pieces like the visions of the night.

The principles of music all depend upon the testimony of the ear. The principles of natural philosophy, upon the facts attested by the senses. The principles of mathematics, upon the necessary relations of quantities considered abstractly, such as, That equal quantities added to equal quantities make equal

CHAP. VI. ſums, and the like; which neceſſary relations are immediately perceived by the underſtanding.

The ſcience of politics borrows its principles from what we know by experience of the character and conduct of man. We conſider not what he ought to be, but what he is, and thence conclude what part he will act in different ſituations and circumſtances. From ſuch principles we reaſon concerning the cauſes and effects of different forms of government, laws, cuſtoms, and manners. If man were either a more perfect or a more imperfect, a better or a worſe creature than he is, politics would be a different ſcience from what it is.

The firſt principles of morals are the immediate dictates of the moral faculty. They ſhew us, not what man is, but what he ought to be. Whatever is immediately perceived to be juſt, honeſt, and honourable, in human conduct, carries moral obligation along with it, and the contrary carries demerit and blame; and, from thoſe moral obligations that are immediately perceived, all other moral obligations muſt be deduced by reaſoning.

He that will judge of the colour of an object, muſt conſult his eyes, in a good light, when there is no medium or contiguous objects that may give it a falſe tinge. But in vain will he conſult every other faculty in this matter.

In like manner, he that will judge of the firſt principles of morals, muſt conſult his conſcience, or moral faculty, when he is calm and diſpaſſionate, unbiaſſed by intereſt, affection, or faſhion.

As we rely upon the clear and diſtinct teſtimony of our eyes, concerning the colours and figures of the bodies about us, we have the ſame reaſon to rely with ſecurity upon the clear and unbiaſſed

unbiaſſed teſtimony of our conſcience, with regard to what we ought and ought not to do. In many caſes, moral worth and demerit are diſcerned no leſs clearly by the laſt of thoſe natural faculties, than figure and colour by the firſt.

The faculties which nature hath given us, are the only engines we can uſe to find out the truth. We cannot indeed prove that thoſe faculties are not fallacious, unleſs God ſhould give us new faculties to ſit in judgment upon the old. But we are born under a neceſſity of truſting them.

Every man in his ſenſes believes his eyes, his ears, and his other ſenſes. He believes his conſciouſneſs with reſpect to his own thoughts and purpoſes, his memory, with regard to what is paſt, his underſtanding, with regard to abſtract relations of things, and his taſte, with regard to what is elegant and beautiful. And he has the ſame reaſon, and, indeed, is under the ſame neceſſity of believing the clear and unbiaſſed dictates of his conſcience, with regard to what is honourable and what is baſe.

The ſum of what has been ſaid in this chapter is, That, by an original power of the mind, which we call *conſcience*, or the *moral faculty*, we have the conceptions of right and wrong in human conduct, of merit and demerit, of duty and moral obligation, and our other moral conceptions; and that, by the ſame faculty, we perceive ſome things in human conduct to be right, and others to be wrong; that the firſt principles of morals are the dictates of this faculty; and that we have the ſame reaſon to rely upon thoſe dictates, as upon the determinations of our ſenſes, or of our other natural faculties.

CHAP. VII.

Of moral Approbation and Diſapprobation.

OUR moral judgments are not like thoſe we form in ſpeculative matters, dry and unaffecting, but, from their nature, are neceſſarily accompanied with affections and feelings, which we are now to conſider.

It was before obſerved, that every human action, conſidered in a moral view, appears to us good, or bad, or indifferent. When we judge the action to be indifferent, neither good nor bad, though this be a moral judgment, it produces no affection nor feeling, any more than our judgments in ſpeculative matters.

But we approve of good actions, and diſapprove of bad; and this approbation and diſapprobation, when we analyſe it, appears to include, not only a moral judgment of the action, but ſome affection, favourable or unfavourable, towards the agent, and ſome feeling in ourſelves.

Nothing is more evident than this, That moral worth, even in a ſtranger, with whom we have not the leaſt connection, never fails to produce ſome degree of eſteem mixed with good will.

The eſteem which we have for a man on account of his moral worth, is different from that which is grounded upon his intellectual accompliſhments, his birth, fortune, and connection with us.

Moral worth, when it is not ſet off by eminent abilities, and external advantages, is like a diamond in the mine, which is rough

rough and unpoliſhed, and perhaps cruſted over with ſome baſer material that takes away its luſtre.

But, when it is attended with theſe advantages, it is like a diamond cut, poliſhed, and ſet. Then its luſtre attracts every eye. Yet theſe things which add ſo much to its appearance, add but little to its real value.

We muſt farther obſerve, that eſteem and benevolent regard, not only accompany real worth by the conſtitution of our nature, but are perceived to be really and properly due to it; and that, on the contrary, unworthy conduct really merits diſlike and indignation.

There is no judgment of the heart of man more clear, or more irreſiſtible, than this, That eſteem and regard are really due to good conduct, and the contrary to baſe and unworthy conduct. Nor can we conceive a greater depravity in the heart of man, than it would be to ſee and acknowledge worth without feeling any reſpect to it; or to ſee and acknowledge the higheſt worthleſſneſs without any degree of diſlike and indignation.

The eſteem that is due to worthy conduct, is not leſſened when a man is conſcious of it in himſelf. Nor can he help having ſome eſteem for himſelf, when he is conſcious of thoſe qualities for which he moſt highly eſteems others.

Self-eſteem, grounded upon external advantages, or the gifts of fortune, is pride. When it is grounded upon a vain conceit of inward worth which we do not poſſeſs, it is arrogance and ſelf-deceit. But when a man, without thinking of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, is conſcious of that integrity of heart, and uprightneſs of conduct, which he moſt highly eſteems in others, and values himſelf duly upon this account; this perhaps may be called the pride of virtue, but it is not a vicious

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vicious pride. It is a noble and magnanimous diſpoſition, without which there can be no ſteady virtue.

A man who has a character with himſelf, which he values, will diſdain to act in a manner unworthy of it. The language of his heart will be like that of JOB, "My righteouſneſs I hold "faſt, and will not let it go; my heart ſhall not reproach me "while I live."

A good man owes much to his character with the world, and will be concerned to vindicate it from unjuſt imputations. But he owes much more to his character with himſelf. For if his heart condemns him not, he has confidence towards GOD; and he can more eaſily bear the laſh of tongues than the reproach of his own mind.

The ſenſe of honour, ſo much ſpoken of, and ſo often miſapplied, is nothing elſe, when rightly underſtood, but the diſdain which a man of worth feels to do a diſhonourable action, though it ſhould never be known nor ſuſpected.

A good man will have a much greater abhorrence againſt doing a bad action, than even againſt having it unjuſtly imputed to him. The laſt may give a wound to his reputation, but the firſt gives a wound to his conſcience, which is more difficult to heal, and more painful to endure.

Let us, on the other hand, conſider how we are affected by diſapprobation, either of the conduct of others, or of our own.

Every thing we diſapprove in the conduct of a man leſſens him in our eſteem. There are indeed brilliant faults, which, having a mixture of good and ill in them, may have a very different aſpect, according to the ſide on which we view them.

In

In ſuch faults of our friends, and much more of ourſelves, we are diſpoſed to view them on the beſt ſide, and on the contrary ſide in thoſe to whom we are ill affected.

This partiality, in taking things by the [illegible] or by the worſt handle, is the chief cauſe of wrong ju[illegible]nt with regard to the character of others, and of ſelf-deceit with regard to our own.

But when we take [illegible]plex actions to pieces, and view every part by itſelf, ill conduct of every kind leſſens our eſteem of a man, as much as good conduct increaſes it. It is apt to turn love into indifference, indifference into contempt, and contempt into averſion and abhorrence.

When a man is conſcious of immoral conduct in himſelf, it leſſens his ſelf-eſteem. It depreſſes and humbles his ſpirit, and makes his countenance to fall. He could even puniſh himſelf for his miſbehaviour, if that could wipe out the ſtain. There is a ſenſe of diſhonour and worthleſſneſs ariſing from guilt, as well as a ſenſe of honour and worth ariſing from worthy conduct. And this is the caſe, even if a man could conceal his guilt from all the world.

We are next to conſider the agreeable or uneaſy feelings, in the breaſt of the ſpectator or judge, which naturally accompany moral approbation and diſapprobation.

There is no affection that is not accompanied with ſome agreeable or uneaſy emotion. It has often been obſerved, that all the benevolent affections give pleaſure, and the contrary ones pain, in one degree or another.

When we contemplate a noble character, though but in ancient hiſtory, or even in fiction; like a beautiful object, it gives

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a lively and pleaſant emotion to the ſpirits. It warms the heart, and invigorates the whole frame. Like the beams of the ſun, it enlivens the face of nature, and diffuſes heat and light all around.

We feel a ſympathy with every noble and worthy character that is repreſented to us. We rejoice in his proſperity, we are afflicted in his diſtreſs. We even catch ſome ſparks of that celeſtial fire that animated his conduct, and feel the glow of his virtue and magnanimity.

This ſympathy is the neceſſary effect of our judgment of his conduct, and of the approbation and eſteem due to it; for real ſympathy is always the effect of ſome benevolent affection, ſuch as eſteem, love, pity or humanity.

When the perſon whom we approve is connected with us by acquaintance, friendſhip or blood, the pleaſure we derive from his conduct is greatly increaſed. We claim ſome property in his worth, and are apt to value ourſelves on account of it. This ſhews a ſtronger degree of ſympathy, which gathers ſtrength from every ſocial tie.

But the higheſt pleaſure of all is, when we are conſcious of good conduct in ourſelves. This, in ſacred ſcripture, is called the *teſtimony of a good conſcience*; and it is repreſented, not only in the ſacred writings, but in the writings of all moraliſts, of every age and ſect, as the pureſt, the moſt noble and valuable of all human enjoyments.

Surely, were we to place the chief happineſs of this life (a thing that has been ſo much ſought after) in any one kind of enjoyment, that which ariſes from the conſciouſneſs of integrity, and a uniform endeavour to act the beſt part in our ſtation, would moſt juſtly claim the preference to all other enjoyments the human

human mind is capable of, on account of its dignity, the intenſeneſs of the happineſs it affords, its ſtability and duration, its being in our power, and its being proof againſt all accidents of time and fortune.

On the other hand, the view of a vicious character, like that of an ugly and deformed object, is diſagreeable. It gives diſguſt and abhorrence.

If the unworthy perſon be nearly connected with us, we have a very painful ſympathy indeed. We bluſh even for the ſmaller faults of thoſe we are connected with, and feel ourſelves, as it were, diſhonoured by their ill conduct.

But, when there is a high degree of depravity in any perſon connected with us, we are deeply humbled and depreſſed by it. The ſympathetic feeling has ſome reſemblance to that of guilt, though it be free from all guilt. We are aſhamed to ſee our acquaintance; we would, if poſſible, diſclaim all connection with the guilty perſon. We wiſh to tear him from our hearts, and to blot him out of our remembrance.

Time, however, alleviates thoſe ſympathetic ſorrows which ariſe from bad behaviour in our friends and connections, if we are conſcious that we had no ſhare in their guilt.

The wiſdom of GOD, in the conſtitution of our nature, hath intended, that this ſympathetic diſtreſs ſhould intereſt us the more deeply in the good behaviour, as well as in the good fortune of our friends; and that thereby friendſhip, relation and every ſocial tie, ſhould be aiding to virtue and unfavourable to vice.

How common is it, even in vicious parents, to be deeply afflicted when their children go into theſe courſes in which per-

CHAP. VII. haps they have gone before them, and, by their example, ſhewn them the way.

If bad conduct in thoſe in whom we are intereſted, be uneaſy and painful, it is ſo much more when we are conſcious of it in ourſelves. This uneaſy feeling has a name in all languages. We call it *remorſe*.

It has been deſcribed in ſuch frightful colours by writers ſacred and profane, by writers of every age and of every perſuaſion, even by Epicureans, that I will not attempt the deſcription of it.

It is on account of the uneaſineſs of this feeling, that bad men take ſo much pains to get rid of it, and to hide, even from their own eyes, as much as poſſible, the pravity of their conduct. Hence ariſe all the arts of ſelf-deceit, by which men varniſh their crimes, or endeavour to waſh out the ſtain of guilt. Hence the various methods of expiation which ſuperſtition has invented, to ſolace the conſcience of the criminal, and give ſome cooling to his parched breaſt. Hence alſo ariſe, very often, the efforts of men of bad hearts to excel in ſome amiable quality, which may be a kind of counterpoiſe to their vices, both in the opinion of others and in their own.

For no man can bear the thought of being abſolutely deſtitute of all worth. The conſciouſneſs of this would make him deteſt himſelf, hate the light of the ſun, and fly, if poſſible, out of exiſtence.

I have now endeavoured to delineate the natural operations of that principle of action in man, which we call the *moral ſenſe*, the *moral faculty*, *conſcience*. We know nothing of our natural faculties, but by their operations within us. Of their operations in our own minds, we are conſcious, and we ſee the ſigns of their

their operations in the minds of others. Of this faculty the operations appear to be, the judging ultimately of what is right, what is wrong, and what is indifferent in the conduct of moral agents; the approbation of good conduct and diſapprobation of bad in conſequence of that judgment, and the agreeable emotions which attend obedience, and diſagreeable which attend diſobedience to its dictates.

The Supreme Being, who has given us eyes to diſcern what may be uſeful and what hurtful to our natural life, hath alſo given us this light within to direct our moral conduct.

Moral conduct is the buſineſs of every man; and therefore the knowledge of it ought to be within the reach of all.

EPICURUS reaſoned acutely and juſtly to ſhew, that a regard to our preſent happineſs ſhould induce us to the practice of temperance, juſtice and humanity. But the bulk of mankind cannot follow long trains of reaſoning. The loud voice of the paſſions drowns the calm and ſtill voice of reaſoning.

Conſcience commands and forbids with more authority, and in the moſt common and moſt important points of conduct, without the labour of reaſoning. Its voice is heard by every man, and cannot be diſregarded with impunity.

The ſenſe of guilt makes a man at variance with himſelf. He ſees that he is what he ought not to be. He has fallen from the dignity of his nature, and has ſold his real worth for a thing of no value. He is conſcious of demerit, and cannot avoid the dread of meeting with its reward.

On the other hand, he who pays a ſacred regard to the dictates of his conſcience, cannot fail of a preſent reward, and a reward proportioned to the exertion required in doing his duty.

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The man who, in oppoſition to ſtrong temptation, by a noble effort, maintains his integrity, is the happieſt man on earth. The more ſevere his conflict has been, the greater is his triumph. The conſciouſneſs of inward worth gives ſtrength to his heart, and makes his countenance to ſhine. Tempeſts may beat and floods roar, but he ſtands firm as a rock in the joy of a good conſcience, and confidence of divine approbation.

To this I ſhall only add, what every man's conſcience dictates, That he who does his duty, from the conviction that it is right and honourable, and what he ought to do, acts from a nobler principle, and with more inward ſatisfaction, than he who is bribed to do it, merely from the conſideration of a reward preſent or future.

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Obſervations concerning Conſcience.

I SHALL now conclude this Eſſay with ſome obſervations concerning this power of the mind which we call *conſcience*, by which its nature may be better underſtood.

The *firſt* is, That, like all our other powers, it comes to maturity by inſenſible degrees, and may be much aided in its ſtrength and vigour by proper culture.

All the human faculties have their infancy and their ſtate of maturity.

The faculties which we have in common with the brutes appear firſt, and have the quickeſt growth. In the firſt period of life, children are not capable of diſtinguiſhing right from wrong

wrong in human conduct; neither are they capable of abſtract reaſoning in matters of ſcience. Their judgment of moral conduct, as well as their judgment of truth, advances by inſenſible degrees, like the corn and the graſs. CHAP. VIII.

In vegetables, firſt the blade or the leaf appears, then the flower, and laſt of all the fruit, the nobleſt production of the three, and that for which the others were produced. Theſe ſucceed one another in a regular order. They require moiſture and heat and air and ſhelter to bring them to maturity, and may be much improved by culture. According to the variations of ſoil, ſeaſon and culture, ſome plants are brought to much greater perfection than others of the ſame ſpecies. But no variation of culture or ſeaſon or ſoil can make grapes grow from thorns, or figs from thiſtles.

We may obſerve a ſimilar progreſs in the faculties of the mind: For there is a wonderful analogy among all the works of GOD, from the leaſt even to the greateſt.

The faculties of man unfold themſelves in a certain order, appointed by the great Creator. In their gradual progreſs, they may be greatly aſſiſted or retarded, improved or corrupted, by education, inſtruction, example, exerciſe, and by the ſociety and converſation of men, which, like ſoil and culture in plants, may produce great changes to the better or to the worſe.

But theſe means can never produce any new faculties, nor any other than were originally planted in the mind by the Author of nature. And what is common to the whole ſpecies, in all the varieties of inſtruction and education, of improvement and degeneracy, is the work of GOD, and not the operation of ſecond cauſes.

Such we may juſtly account conſcience, or the faculty of diſtinguiſhing

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ſtinguiſhing right conduct from wrong; ſince it appears, and in all nations and ages, has appeared, in men that are come to maturity.

The ſeeds, as it were, of moral diſcernment are planted in the mind by him that made us. They grow up in their proper ſeaſon, and are at firſt tender and delicate, and eaſily warped. Their progreſs depends very much upon their being duly cultivated and properly exerciſed.

It is ſo with the power of reaſoning, which all acknowledge to be one of the moſt eminent natural faculties of man. It appears not in infancy. It ſprings up, by inſenſible degrees, as we grow to maturity. But its ſtrength and vigour depend ſo much upon its being duly cultivated and exerciſed, that we ſee many individuals, nay many nations, in which it is hardly to be perceived.

Our intellectual diſcernment is not ſo ſtrong and vigorous by nature, as to ſecure us from errors in ſpeculation. On the contrary, we ſee a great part of mankind, in every age, ſunk in groſs ignorance of things that are obvious to the more enlightened, and fettered by errors and falſe notions, which the human underſtanding, duly improved, eaſily throws off.

It would be extremely abſurd, from the errors and ignorance of mankind, to conclude that there is no ſuch thing as truth; or that man has not a natural faculty of diſcerning it, and diſtinguiſhing it from error.

In like manner, our moral diſcernment of what we ought, and what we ought not to do, is not ſo ſtrong and vigorous by nature, as to ſecure us from very groſs miſtakes with regard to our duty.

In

In matters of conduct, as well as in matters of ſpeculation, we are liable to be miſled by prejudices of education, or by wrong inſtruction. But, in matters of conduct, we are alſo very liable to have our judgment warped by our appetites and paſſions, by faſhion, and by the contagion of evil example.

We muſt not therefore think, becauſe man has the natural power of diſcerning what is right and what is wrong, that he has no need of inſtruction; that this power has no need of cultivation and improvement; that he may ſafely rely upon the ſuggeſtions of his mind, or upon opinions he has got, he knows not how.

What ſhould we think of a man who, becauſe he has by nature the power of moving all his limbs, ſhould therefore conclude that he needs not be taught to dance, or to fence, to ride, or to ſwim? All theſe exerciſes are performed by that power of moving our limbs, which we have by nature; but they will be performed very awkwardly and imperfectly by thoſe who have not been trained to them, and practiſed in them.

What ſhould we think of the man who, becauſe he has the power by nature of diſtinguiſhing what is true from what is falſe, ſhould conclude that he has no need to be taught mathematics, or natural philoſophy, or other ſciences? It is by the natural power of human underſtanding that every thing in thoſe ſciences has been diſcovered, and that the truths they contain are diſcerned. But the underſtanding left to itſelf, without the aid of inſtruction, training, habit, and exerciſe, would make very ſmall progreſs, as every one ſees, in perſons uninſtructed in thoſe matters.

Our natural power of diſcerning between right and wrong, needs the aid of inſtruction, education, exerciſe, and habit, as well as our other natural powers.

There

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There are perſons who, as the ſcripture ſpeaks, have, by reaſon of uſe, their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil; by that means, they have a much quicker, clearer, and more certain judgment in morals than others.

The man who neglects the means of improvement in the knowledge of his duty, may do very bad things, while he follows the light of his mind. And though he be not culpable for acting according to his judgment, he may be very culpable for not uſing the means of having his judgment better informed.

It may be obſerved, That there are truths, both ſpeculative and moral, which a man left to himſelf would never diſcover; yet, when they are fairly laid before him, he owns and adopts them, not barely upon the authority of his teacher, but upon their own intrinſic evidence, and perhaps wonders that he could be ſo blind as not to ſee them before.

Like a man whoſe ſon has been long abroad, and ſuppoſed dead. After many years the ſon returns, and is not known by his father. He would never find that this is his ſon. But, when he diſcovers himſelf, the father ſoon finds, by many circumſtances, that this is his ſon who was loſt, and can be no other perſon.

Truth has an affinity with the human underſtanding, which error hath not. And right principles of conduct have an affinity with a candid mind, which wrong principles have not. When they are ſet before it in a juſt light, a well diſpoſed mind recogniſes this affinity, feels their authority, and perceives them to be genuine. It was this, I apprehend, that led PLATO to conceive that the knowledge we acquire in the preſent ſtate, is only reminiſcence of what, in a former ſtate, we were acquainted with.

A man born and brought up in a ſavage nation, may be taught to purſue injury with unrelenting malice, to the deſtruction of his enemy. Perhaps when he does ſo, his heart does not condemn him.

Yet, if he be fair and candid, and, when the tumult of paſſion is over, have the virtues of clemency, generoſity, and forgiveneſs, laid before him, as they were taught and exemplified by the divine Author of our religion, he will ſee, that it is more noble to overcome himſelf, and ſubdue a ſavage paſſion, than to deſtroy his enemy. He will ſee, that to make a friend of an enemy, and to overcome evil with good, is the greateſt of all victories, and gives a manly and a rational delight, with which the brutiſh paſſion of revenge deſerves not to be compared. He will ſee that hitherto he acted like a man to his friends, but like a brute to his enemies; now he knows how to make his whole character conſiſtent, and one part of it to harmonize with another.

He muſt indeed be a great ſtranger to his own heart, and to the ſtate of human nature, who does not ſee that he has need of all the aid which his ſituation affords him, in order to know how he ought to act in many caſes that occur.

A *ſecond* obſervation is, That conſcience is peculiar to man. We ſee not a veſtige of it in brute-animals. It is one of thoſe prerogatives by which we are raiſed above them.

Brute-animals have many faculties in common with us. They ſee, and hear, and taſte, and ſmell, and feel. They have their pleaſures and pains. They have various inſtincts and appetites. They have an affection for their offspring, and ſome of them for their herd or flock. Dogs have a wonderful attachment to their maſters, and give manifeſt ſigns of ſympathy with them.

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We ſee, in brute-animals, anger and emulation, pride and ſhame. Some of them are capable of being trained by habit, and by rewards and puniſhments, to many things uſeful to man.

All this muſt be granted; and if our perception of what we ought, and what we ought not to do, could be reſolved into any of theſe principles, or into any combination of them, it would follow, that ſome brutes are moral agents, and accountable for their conduct.

But common ſenſe revolts againſt this concluſion. A man who ſeriouſly charged a brute with a crime, would be laughed at. They may do actions hurtful to themſelves, or to man. They may have qualities, or acquire habits, that lead to ſuch actions; and this is all we mean when we call them vicious. But they cannot be immoral; nor can they be virtuous. They are not capable of ſelf-government; and, when they act according to the paſſion or habit which is ſtrongeſt at the time, they act according to the nature that GOD has given them, and no more can be required of them.

They cannot lay down a rule to themſelves, which they are not to tranſgreſs, though prompted by appetite, or ruffled by paſſion. We ſee no reaſon to think that they can form the conception of a general rule, or of obligation to adhere to it.

They have no conception of a promiſe or contract; nor can you enter into any treaty with them. They can neither affirm nor deny, nor reſolve, nor plight their faith. If nature had made them capable of theſe operations, we ſhould ſee the ſigns of them in their motions and geſtures.

The moſt ſagacious brutes never invented a language, nor learned the uſe of one before invented. They never formed a plan

plan of government, nor tranſmitted inventions to their poſte- CHAP. VIII.
rity.

Theſe things, and many others that are obvious to common obſervation, ſhew that there is juſt reaſon why mankind have always conſidered the brute-creation as deſtitute of the nobleſt faculties with which GOD hath endowed man, and particularly of that faculty which makes us moral and accountable beings.

The *next* obſervation is, That conſcience is evidently intended by nature to be the immediate guide and director of our conduct, after we arrive at the years of underſtanding.

There are many things, which, from their nature and ſtructure, ſhew intuitively the end for which they were made.

A man who knows the ſtructure of a watch or clock, can have no doubt in concluding that it was made to meaſure time. And he that knows the ſtructure of the eye, and the properties of light, can have as little doubt whether it was made that we might ſee by it.

In the fabric of the body, the intention of the ſeveral parts is, in many inſtances, ſo evident, as to leave no poſſibility of doubt. Who can doubt whether the muſcles were intended to move the parts in which they are inſerted? Whether the bones were intended to give ſtrength and ſupport to the body; and ſome of them to guard the parts which they incloſe?

When we attend to the ſtructure of the mind, the intention of its various original powers is no leſs evident. Is it not evident, that the external ſenſes are given, that we may diſcern thoſe qualities of bodies which may be uſeful or hurtful to us. Memory, that we may retain the knowledge we have acquired?

CHAP. VIII. Judgment and underſtanding, that we may diſtinguiſh what is true from what is falſe?

The natural appetites of hunger and thirſt, the natural affections of parents to their offspring, and of relations to each other, the natural docility and credulity of children, the affections of pity and ſympathy with the diſtreſſed, the attachment we feel to neighbours, to acquaintance, and to the laws and conſtitution of our country; theſe are parts of our conſtitution, which plainly point out their end, ſo that he muſt be blind, or very inattentive, who does not perceive it. Even the paſſions of anger and reſentment, appear very plainly to be a kind of defenſive armour, given by our Maker to guard us againſt injuries, and to deter the injurious.

Thus it holds generally with regard both to the intellectual and active powers of man, that the intention for which they are given, is written in legible characters upon the face of them.

Nor is this the caſe of any of them more evidently than of conſcience. Its intention is manifeſtly implied in its office; which is, to ſhew us what is good, what bad, and what indifferent in human conduct.

It judges of every action before it is done. For we can rarely act ſo precipitately, but we have the conſciouſneſs that what we are about to do is right, or wrong, or indifferent. Like the bodily eye, it naturally looks forward, though its attention may be turned back to the paſt.

To conceive, as ſome ſeem to have done, that its office is only to reflect on paſt actions, and to approve or diſapprove, is, as if a man ſhould conceive, that the office of his eyes is only to look back upon the road he has travelled, and to ſee whether it be clean

clean or dirty; a miſtake which no man can make who has made the proper uſe of his eyes. CHAP. VIII.

Conſcience preſcribes meaſures to every appetite, affection, and paſſion, and ſays to every other principle of action, So far thou mayeſt go, but no farther.

We may indeed tranſgreſs its dictates, but we cannot tranſgreſs them with innocence, nor even with impunity.

We condemn ourſelves, or, in the language of ſcripture, *our heart condemns us*, whenever we go beyond the rules of right and wrong which conſcience preſcribes.

Other principles of action may have more ſtrength, but this only has authority. Its ſentence makes us guilty to ourſelves, and guilty in the eyes of our Maker, whatever other principle may be ſet in oppoſition to it.

It is evident therefore, that this principle has, from its nature, an authority to direct and determine with regard to our conduct; to judge, to acquit, or to condemn, and even to puniſh; an authority which belongs to no other principle of the human mind.

It is the candle of the LORD ſet up within us, to guide our ſteps. Other principles may urge and impel, but this only authoriſes. Other principles ought to be controlled by this; this may be, but never ought to be controlled by any other, and never can be with innocence.

The authority of conſcience over the other active principles of the mind, I do not conſider as a point that requires proof by argument, but as ſelf-evident. For it implies no more than this,

That

CHAP. VIII. That in all caſes a man ought to do his duty. He only who does in all caſes what he ought to do, is the perfect man.

Of this perfection in the human nature, the Stoics formed the idea, and held it forth in their writings, as the goal to which the race of life ought to be directed. Their *wiſe man* was one in whom a regard to the *honeſtum* ſwallowed up every other principle of action.

The *wiſe man* of the Stoics, like the *perfect orator* of the rhetoricians, was an ideal character, and was, in ſome reſpects, carried beyond nature; yet it was perhaps the moſt perfect model of virtue, that ever was exhibited to the heathen world; and ſome of thoſe who copied after it, were ornaments to human nature.

The *laſt* obſervation is, That the moral faculty or conſcience is both an active and an intellectual power of the mind.

It is an active power, as every truly virtuous action muſt be more or leſs influenced by it. Other principles may concur with it, and lead the ſame way; but no action can be called morally good, in which a regard to what is right, has not ſome influence. Thus a man who has no regard to juſtice, may pay his juſt debt, from no other motive, but that he may not be thrown into priſon. In this action there is no virtue at all.

The moral principle, in particular caſes, may be oppoſed by any of our animal principles. Paſſion or appetite may urge to what we know to be wrong. In every inſtance of this kind, the moral principle ought to prevail, and the more difficult its conqueſt is, it is the more glorious.

In ſome caſes, a regard to what is right may be the ſole motive, without the concurrence or oppoſition of any other principle

ciple of action; as when a judge or an arbiter determines a plea between two indifferent perſons, ſolely from a regard to juſtice. CHAP. VIII.

Thus we ſee, that conſcience, as an active principle, ſometimes concurs with other active principles, ſometimes oppoſes them, and ſometimes is the ſole principle of action.

I endeavoured before to ſhew, that a regard to our own good upon the whole is not only a rational principle of action, but a leading principle, to which all our animal principles are ſubordinate. As theſe are, therefore, two regulating or leading principles in the conſtitution of man, a regard to what is beſt for us upon the whole, and a regard to duty, it may be aſked, Which of theſe ought to yield if they happen to interfere?

Some well meaning perſons have maintained, That all regard to ourſelves and to our own happineſs ought to be extinguiſhed; that we ſhould love virtue for its own ſake only, even though it were to be accompanied with eternal miſery.

This ſeems to have been the extravagance of ſome Myſtics, which perhaps they were led into, in oppoſition to a contrary extreme of the ſchoolmen of the middle ages, who made the deſire of good to ourſelves to be the ſole motive to action, and virtue to be approvable only on account of its preſent or future reward.

Juſter views of human nature will teach us to avoid both theſe extremes.

On the one hand, the diſintereſted love of virtue is undoubtedly the nobleſt principle in human nature, and ought never to ſtoop to any other.

On

CHAP. VIII.

On the other hand, there is no active principle which GOD hath planted in our nature that is vicious in itſelf, or that ought to be eradicated, even if it were in our power.

They are all uſeful and neceſſary in our preſent ſtate. The perfection of human nature conſiſts, not in extinguiſhing, but in reſtraining them within their proper bounds, and keeping them in due ſubordination to the governing principles.

As to the ſuppoſition of an oppoſition between the two governing principles, that is, between a regard to our happineſs upon the whole, and a regard to duty, this ſuppoſition is merely imaginary. There can be no ſuch oppoſition.

While the world is under a wiſe and benevolent adminiſtration, it is impoſſible, that any man *ſhould*, in the *iſſue*, be a loſer by doing his duty. Every man, therefore, who believes in GOD, while he is careful to do his duty, may ſafely leave the care of his happineſs to him who made him. He is conſcious that he conſults the laſt moſt effectually by attending to the firſt.

Indeed, if we ſuppoſe a man to be an atheiſt in his belief, and, at the ſame time, by wrong judgment, to believe that virtue is contrary to his happineſs upon the whole, this caſe, as Lord SHAFTESBURY juſtly obſerves, is without remedy. It will be impoſſible for the man to act, ſo as not to contradict a leading principle of his nature. He muſt either ſacrifice his happineſs to virtue, or virtue to happineſs; and is reduced to this miſerable dilemma, whether it be beſt to be a fool or a knave.

This ſhews the ſtrong connection between morality and the principles of natural religion; as the laſt only can ſecure a man from the poſſibility of an apprehenſion, that he may play the fool by doing his duty.

Hence,

Hence, even Lord SHAFTESBURY, in his graveſt work, concludes, *That virtue without piety is incomplete.* Without piety, it loſes its brighteſt example, its nobleſt object, and its firmeſt ſupport.

I conclude with obſerving, That conſcience, or the moral faculty, is likewiſe an intellectual power.

By it ſolely we have the original conceptions or ideas of right and wrong in human conduct. And of right and wrong, there are not only many different degrees, but many different ſpecies. Juſtice and injuſtice, gratitude and ingratitude, benevolence and malice, prudence and folly, magnanimity and meanneſs, decency and indecency, are various moral forms, all comprehended under the general notion of right and wrong in conduct, all of them objects of moral approbation or diſapprobation, in a greater or a leſs degree.

The conception of theſe, as moral qualities, we have by our moral faculty; and by the ſame faculty, when we compare them together, we perceive various moral relations among them. Thus, we perceive, that juſtice is entitled to a ſmall degree of praiſe, but injuſtice to a high degree of blame; and the ſame may be ſaid of gratitude and its contrary. When juſtice and gratitude interfere, gratitude muſt give place to juſtice, and unmerited beneficence muſt give place to both.

Many ſuch relations between the various moral qualities compared together, are immediately diſcerned by our moral faculty. A man needs only to conſult his own heart to be convinced of them.

All our reaſonings in morals, in natural juriſprudence, in the law of nations, as well as our reaſonings about the duties of natural religion, and about the moral government of the Deity,

CHAP. VIII. must be grounded upon the dictates of our moral faculty, as firſt principles.

As this faculty, therefore, furniſhes the human mind with many of its original conceptions or ideas, as well as with the firſt principles of many important branches of human knowledge, it may juſtly be accounted an intellectual, as well as an active power of the mind.

ESSAY

ESSAY IV.

OF THE LIBERTY OF MORAL AGENTS.

CHAP. I.

The Notions of Moral Liberty and Neceſſity ſtated.

BY the *liberty* of a moral agent, I underſtand, a power over the determinations of his own will.

If, in any action, he had power to will what he did, or not to will it, in that action he is free. But if, in every voluntary action, the determination of his will be the neceſſary conſequence of ſomething involuntary in the ſtate of his mind, or of ſomething in his external circumſtances, he is not free; he has not what I call the liberty of a moral agent, but is ſubject to neceſſity.

This liberty ſuppoſes the agent to have underſtanding and will; for the determinations of the will are the ſole object about which this power is employed; and there can be no will without ſuch a degree of underſtanding, at leaſt, as gives the conception of that which we will.

The liberty of a moral agent implies, not only a conception of what he wills, but ſome degree of practical judgment or reaſon.

For, if he has not the judgment to diſcern one determination

CHAP. I.

to be preferable to another, either in itſelf, or for ſome purpoſe which he intends, what can be the uſe of a power to determine? His determinations muſt be made perfectly in the dark, without reaſon, motive or end. They can neither be right nor wrong, wiſe nor fooliſh. Whatever the conſequences may be, they cannot be imputed to the agent, who had not the capacity of foreſeeing them, or of perceiving any reaſon for acting otherwiſe than he did.

We may perhaps be able to conceive a being endowed with power over the determinations of his will, without any light in his mind to direct that power to ſome end. But ſuch power would be given in vain. No exerciſe of it could be either blamed or approved. As nature gives no power in vain, I ſee no ground to aſcribe a power over the determinations of the will to any being who has no judgment to apply it to the direction of his conduct, no diſcernment of what he ought or ought not to do.

For that reaſon, in this Eſſay, I ſpeak only of the liberty of moral agents, who are capable of acting well or ill, wiſely or fooliſhly, and this, for diſtinction's ſake, I ſhall call *moral liberty*.

What kind, or what degree of liberty belongs to brute animals, or to our own ſpecies, before any uſe of reaſon, I do not know. We acknowledge that they have not the power of ſelf-government. Such of their actions as may be called *voluntary*, ſeem to be invariably determined by the paſſion or appetite, or affection or habit which is ſtrongeſt at the time.

This ſeems to be the law of their conſtitution, to which they yield, as the inanimate creation does, without any conception of the law, or any intention of obedience.

But of civil or moral government, which are addreſſed to the rational

rational powers, and require a conception of the law and an intentional obedience, they are, in the judgment of all mankind, incapable. Nor do I ſee what end could be ſerved by giving them a power over the determinations of their own will, unleſs to make them intractable by diſcipline, which we ſee they are not.

The effect of moral liberty is, That it is in the power of the agent to do well or ill. This power, like every other gift of GOD, may be abuſed. The right uſe of this gift of GOD is to do well and wiſely, as far as his beſt judgment can direct him, and thereby merit eſteem and approbation. The abuſe of it is to act contrary to what he knows or ſuſpects to be his duty and his wiſdom, and thereby juſtly merit diſapprobation and blame.

By *neceſſity*, I underſtand the want of that moral liberty which I have above defined.

If there can be a better and a worſe in actions on the ſyſtem of neceſſity, let us ſuppoſe a man neceſſarily determined in all caſes to will and to do what is beſt to be done, he would ſurely be innocent and inculpable. But, as far as I am able to judge, he would not be entitled to the eſteem and moral approbation of thoſe who knew and believed this neceſſity. What was, by an ancient author, ſaid of CATO, might indeed be ſaid of him. *He was good becauſe he could not be otherwiſe.* But this ſaying, if underſtood literally and ſtrictly, is not the praiſe of CATO, but of his conſtitution, which was no more the work of CATO, than his exiſtence.

On the other hand, if a man be neceſſarily determined to do ill, this caſe ſeems to me to move pity, but not diſapprobation. He was ill, becauſe he could not be otherwiſe. Who can blame him? Neceſſity has no law.

If

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If he knows that he acted under this neceſſity, has he not juſt ground to exculpate himſelf? The blame, if there be any, is not in him, but in his conſtitution. If he be charged by his Maker with doing wrong, may he not expoſtulate with him, and ſay, Why haſt thou made me thus? I may be ſacrificed at thy pleaſure, for the common good, like a man that has the plague, but not for ill deſert; for thou knoweſt that what I am charged with is thy work, and not mine.

Such are my notions of moral liberty and neceſſity, and of the conſequences inſeparably connected with both the one and the other.

This moral liberty a man may have, though it do not extend to all his actions, or even to all his voluntary actions. He does many things by inſtinct, many things by the force of habit without any thought at all, and conſequently without will. In the firſt part of life, he has not the power of ſelf-government any more than the brutes. That power over the determinations of his own will, which belongs to him in ripe years, is limited, as all his powers are; and it is perhaps beyond the reach of his underſtanding to define its limits with preciſion. We can only ſay, in general, that it extends to every action for which he is accountable.

This power is given by his Maker, and at his pleaſure whoſe gift it is, it may be enlarged or diminiſhed, continued or withdrawn. No power in the creature can be independent of the Creator. His hook is in its noſe; he can give it line as far as he ſees fit, and, when he pleaſes, can reſtrain it, or turn it whitherſoever he will. Let this be always underſtood, when we aſcribe liberty to man, or to any created being.

Suppoſing it therefore to be true, That man is a free agent, it may be true, at the ſame time, that his liberty may be impaired or loſt, by diſorder of body or mind, as in melancholy, or

or in madneſs; it may be impaired or loſt by vicious habits; it may, in particular caſes, be reſtrained by divine interpoſition.

We call man a free agent in the ſame way as we call him a reaſonable agent. In many things he is not guided by reaſon, but by principles ſimilar to thoſe of the brutes. His reaſon is weak at beſt. It is liable to be impaired or loſt, by his own fault, or by other means. In like manner, he may be a free agent, though his freedom of action may have many ſimilar limitations.

The liberty I have deſcribed has been repreſented by ſome Philoſophers as inconceivable, and as involving an abſurdity.

"Liberty, they ſay, conſiſts only in a power to act as we will; and it is impoſſible to conceive in any being a greater liberty than this. Hence it follows, that liberty does not extend to the determinations of the will, but only to the actions conſequent to its determination, and depending upon the will. To ſay that we have power to will ſuch an action, is to ſay, that we may will it, if we will. This ſuppoſes the will to be determined by a prior will; and, for the ſame reaſon, that will muſt be determined by a will prior to it, and ſo on in an infinite ſeries of wills, which is abſurd. To act freely, therefore, can mean nothing more than to act voluntarily; and this is all the liberty that can be conceived in man, or in any being."

This reaſoning, firſt, I think, advanced by HOBBES, has been very generally adopted by the defenders of neceſſity. It is grounded upon a definition of liberty totally different from that which I have given, and therefore does not apply to moral liberty, as above defined.

But it is ſaid that this is the only liberty that is poſſible, that is conceivable, that does not involve an abſurdity.

It

CHAP. I. It is ſtrange, indeed! if the word *liberty* has no meaning but this one. I ſhall mention three all very common. The objection applies to one of them, but to neither of the other two.

Liberty is ſometimes oppoſed to external force or confinement of the body. Sometimes it is oppoſed to obligation by law, or by lawful authority. Sometimes it is oppoſed to neceſſity.

1. It is oppoſed to confinement of the body by ſuperior force. So we ſay a priſoner is ſet at liberty when his fetters are knocked off, and he is diſcharged from confinement. This is the liberty defined in the objection; and I grant that this liberty extends not to the will, neither does the confinement, becauſe the will cannot be confined by external force.

2. Liberty is oppoſed to obligation by law, or lawful authority. This liberty is a right to act one way or another, in things which the law has neither commanded nor forbidden; and this liberty is meant when we ſpeak of a man's natural liberty, his civil liberty, his Chriſtian liberty. It is evident that this liberty, as well as the obligation oppoſed to it, extends to the will: For it is the will to obey that makes obedience; the will to tranſgreſs that makes a tranſgreſſion of the law. Without will there can be neither obedience nor tranſgreſſion. Law ſuppoſes a power to obey or to tranſgreſs; it does not take away this power, but propoſes the motives of duty and of intereſt, leaving the power to yield to them, or to take the conſequence of tranſgreſſion.

3. Liberty is oppoſed to neceſſity, and in this ſenſe it extends to the determinations of the will only, and not to what is conſequent to the will.

In every voluntary action, the determination of the will is the firſt part of the action, upon which alone the moral eſtima-

tion

tion of it depends. It has been made a queſtion among Philoſophers, Whether, in every inſtance, this determination be the neceſſary conſequence of the conſtitution of the perſon, and the circumſtances in which he is placed; or whether he had not power, in many caſes, to determine this way or that?

This has, by ſome, been called the *philoſophical* notion of liberty and neceſſity; but it is by no means peculiar to Philoſophers. The loweſt of the vulgar have, in all ages, been prone to have recourſe to this neceſſity, to exculpate themſelves or their friends in what they do wrong, though, in the general tenor of their conduct, they act upon the contrary principle.

Whether this notion of moral liberty be conceivable or not, every man muſt judge for himſelf. To me there appears no difficulty in conceiving it. I conſider the determination of the will as an effect. This effect muſt have a cauſe which had power to produce it; and the cauſe muſt be either the perſon himſelf, whoſe will it is, or ſome other being. The firſt is as eaſily conceived as the laſt. If the perſon was the cauſe of that determination of his own will, he was free in that action, and it is juſtly imputed to him, whether it be good or bad. But, if another being was the cauſe of this determination, either by producing it immediately, or by means and inſtruments under his direction, then the determination is the act and deed of that being, and is ſolely imputable to him.

But it is ſaid, "That nothing is in our power but what depends upon the will, and therefore the will itſelf cannot be in our power."

I anſwer, That this is a fallacy ariſing from taking a common ſaying in a ſenſe which it never was intended to convey, and in a ſenſe contrary to what it neceſſarily implies.

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In common life, when men ſpeak of what is, or is not, in a man's power, they attend only to the external and viſible effects, which only can be perceived, and which only can affect them. Of theſe, it is true, that nothing is in a man's power, but what depends upon his will, and this is all that is meant by this common ſaying.

But this is ſo far from excluding his will from being in his power, that it neceſſarily implies it. For to ſay that what depends upon the will is in a man's power, but the will is not in his power, is to ſay that the end is in his power, but the means neceſſary to that end are not in his power, which is a contradiction.

In many propoſitions which we expreſs univerſally, there is an exception neceſſarily implied, and therefore always underſtood. Thus when we ſay that all things depend upon GOD, GOD himſelf is neceſſarily excepted. In like manner, when we ſay, that all that is in our power depends upon the will, the will itſelf is neceſſarily excepted: For if the will be not, nothing elſe can be in our power. Every effect muſt be in the power of its cauſe. The determination of the will is an effect, and therefore muſt be in the power of its cauſe, whether that cauſe be the agent himſelf, or ſome other being.

From what has been ſaid in this chapter, I hope the notion of moral liberty will be diſtinctly underſtood, and that it appears that this notion is neither inconceivable, nor involves any abſurdity or contradiction.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Words Cauſe and Effect, Action, and Active Power.

THE writings upon liberty and neceſſity have been much darkened, by the ambiguity of the words uſed in reaſoning upon that ſubject. The words *cauſe* and *effect*, *action* and *active power*, *liberty* and *neceſſity*, are related to each other: The meaning of one determines the meaning of the reſt. When we attempt to define them, we can only do it by ſynonymous words which need definition as much. There is a ſtrict ſenſe in which thoſe words muſt be uſed, if we ſpeak and reaſon clearly about moral liberty; but to keep to this ſtrict ſenſe is difficult, becauſe, in all languages, they have, by cuſtom, got a great latitude of ſignification.

As we cannot reaſon about moral liberty, without uſing thoſe ambiguous words, it is proper to point out, as diſtinctly as poſſible, their proper and original meaning, in which they ought to be underſtood in treating of this ſubject, and to ſhew from what cauſes they have become ſo ambiguous in all languages, as to darken and embarraſs our reaſonings upon it.

Every thing that begins to exiſt, muſt have a cauſe of its exiſtence, which had power to give it exiſtence. And every thing that undergoes any change, muſt have ſome cauſe of that change.

That neither exiſtence, nor any mode of exiſtence, can begin without an efficient cauſe, is a principle that appears very early in the mind of man; and it is ſo univerſal, and ſo firmly rooted in human nature, that the moſt determined ſcepticiſm cannot eradicate it.

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It is upon this principle that we ground the rational belief of a deity. But that is not the only uſe to which we apply it. Every man's conduct is governed by it every day, and almoſt every hour of his life. And if it were poſſible for any man to root out this principle from his mind, he muſt give up every thing that is called common prudence, and be fit only to be confined as infane.

From this principle it follows, That every thing which undergoes any change, muſt either be the efficient cauſe of that change in itſelf, or it muſt be changed by ſome other being.

In the *firſt* caſe it is ſaid to have *active power*, and to *act* in producing that change. In the *ſecond* caſe it is merely *paſſive*, or is *acted upon*, and the active power is in that being only which produces the change.

The name of a *cauſe* and of an *agent*, is properly given to that being only, which, by its active power, produces ſome change in itſelf, or in ſome other being. The change, whether it be of thought, of will, or of motion, is the *effect*. Active power therefore, is a quality in the cauſe, which enables it to produce the effect. And the exertion of that active power in producing the effect, is called *action, agency, efficiency*.

In order to the production of any effect, there muſt be in the cauſe, not only power, but the exertion of that power: For power that is not exerted produces no effect.

All that is neceſſary to the production of any effect, is power in an efficient cauſe to produce the effect, and the exertion of that power: For it is a contradiction to ſay, that the cauſe has power to produce the effect, and exerts that power, and yet the effect is not produced. The effect cannot be in his power unleſs all the means neceſſary to its production be in his power.

It

It is no leſs a contradiction to ſay, that a cauſe has power to produce a certain effect, but that he cannot exert that power: For power which cannot be exerted is no power, and is a contradiction in terms.

To prevent miſtake, it is proper to obſerve, That a being may have a power at one time which it has not at another. It may commonly have a power, which, at a particular time, it has not. Thus, a man may commonly have power to walk or to run; but he has not this power when aſleep, or when he is confined by ſuperior force. In common language, he may be ſaid to have a power which he cannot then exert. But this popular expreſſion means only that he commonly has this power, and will have it when the cauſe is removed which at preſent deprives him of it: For when we ſpeak ſtrictly and philoſophically, it is a contradiction to ſay that he has this power, at that moment when he is deprived of it.

Theſe, I think, are neceſſary conſequences from the principle firſt mentioned, That every change which happens in nature muſt have an efficient cauſe which had power to produce it.

Another principle, which appears very early in the mind of man, is, That we are efficient cauſes in our deliberate and voluntary actions.

We are conſcious of making an exertion, ſometimes with difficulty, in order to produce certain effects. An exertion made deliberately and voluntarily, in order to produce an effect, implies a conviction that the effect is in our power. No man can deliberately attempt what he does not believe to be in his power. The language of all mankind, and their ordinary conduct in life, demonſtrate, that they have a conviction of ſome active power in themſelves to produce certain motions in their own and in other bodies, and to regulate and direct their own thoughts.

This

CHAP. II. This conviction we have ſo early in life, that we have no remembrance when, or in what way we acquired it.

That ſuch a conviction is at firſt the neceſſary reſult of our conſtitution, and that it can never be entirely obliterated, is, I think, acknowledged by one of the moſt zealous defenders of neceſſity. *Free Diſcuſſion*, &c. *p.* 298. "Such are the influences "to which all mankind, without diſtinction, are expoſed, that "they neceſſarily refer actions (I mean refer them ultimately) "firſt of all to themſelves and others; and it is a long time be- "fore they begin to conſider themſelves and others as inſtru- "ments in the hand of a ſuperior agent. Conſequently, the "aſſociations which refer actions to themſelves get ſo confirm- "ed, that they are never entirely obliterated; and therefore "the common language, and the common feelings of mankind, "will be adapted to the firſt, the limited and imperfect, or ra- "ther erroneous view of things."

It is very probable, that the very conception or idea of active power, and of efficient cauſes, is derived from our voluntary exertions in producing effects; and that, if we were not conſcious of ſuch exertions, we ſhould have no conception at all of a cauſe, or of active power, and conſequently no conviction of the neceſſity of a cauſe of every change which we obſerve in nature.

It is certain that we can conceive no kind of active power but what is ſimilar or analogous to that which we attribute to ourſelves; that is, a power which is exerted by will and with underſtanding. Our notion, even of Almighty power, is derived from the notion of human power, by removing from the former thoſe imperfections and limitations to which the latter is ſubjected.

It may be difficult to explain the origin of our conceptions and

and belief concerning efficient cauſes and active power. The common theory, that all our ideas are ideas of ſenſation or reflection, and that all our belief is a perception of the agreement or the diſagreement of thoſe ideas, appears to be repugnant, both to the idea of an efficient cauſe, and to the belief of its neceſſity.

An attachment to that theory has led ſome Philoſophers to deny that we have any conception of an efficient cauſe, or of active power, becauſe efficiency and active power are not ideas, either of ſenſation or reflection. They maintain, therefore, that a cauſe is only ſomething prior to the effect, and conſtantly conjoined with it. This is Mr HUME's notion of a cauſe, and ſeems to be adopted by Dr PRIESTLEY, who ſays, "That a cauſe "cannot be defined to be any thing, but *ſuch previous circum-* "*ſtances as are conſtantly followed by a certain effect*, the conſtancy "of the reſult making us conclude, that there muſt be a *ſufficient* "*reaſon*, in the nature of the things, why it ſhould be produced "in thoſe circumſtances."

But theory ought to ſtoop to fact, and not fact to theory. Every man who underſtands the language knows, that neither priority, nor conſtant conjunction, nor both taken together, imply efficiency. Every man, free from prejudice, muſt aſſent to what CICERO has ſaid: *Itaque non ſic cauſa intelligi debet, ut quod cuique antecedat, id et cauſa ſit, ſed quod cuique efficienter antecedit.*

The very diſpute, whether we have the conception of an efficient cauſe, ſhows that we have. For though men may diſpute about things which have no exiſtence, they cannot diſpute about things of which they have no conception.

What has been ſaid in this chapter is intended to ſhew, That the conception of cauſes, of action and of active power, in the ſtrict and proper ſenſe of theſe words, is found in the minds of all

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all men very early, even in the dawn of their rational life. It is therefore probable, that, in all languages, the words by which theſe conceptions were expreſſed were at firſt diſtinct and unambiguous, yet it is certain, that, among the moſt enlightened nations, theſe words are applied to ſo many things of different natures, and uſed in ſo vague a manner, that it is very difficult to reaſon about them diſtinctly.

This phænomenon, at firſt view, ſeems very unaccountable. But a little reflection may ſatisfy us, that it is a natural conſequence of the ſlow and gradual progreſs of human knowledge.

And ſince the ambiguity of theſe words has ſo great influence upon our reaſoning about moral liberty, and furniſhes the ſtrongeſt objections againſt it, it is not foreign to our ſubject to ſhew whence it ariſes. When we know the cauſes that have produced this ambiguity, we ſhall be leſs in danger of being miſled by it, and the proper and ſtrict meaning of the words will more evidently appear.

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CHAP. III.

Cauſes of the Ambiguity of thoſe Words.

WHEN we turn our attention to external objects, and begin to exerciſe our rational faculties about them, we find, that there are ſome motions and changes in them, which we have power to produce, and that they have many which muſt have ſome other cauſe. Either the objects muſt have life and active power, as we have, or they muſt be moved or changed by ſomething that has life and active power, as external objects are moved by us.

Our firſt thoughts ſeem to be, That the objects in which we perceive ſuch motion have underſtanding and active power as we have.

" Savages, ſays the Abbé RAYNAL, wherever they ſee motion " which they cannot account for, there they ſuppoſe a ſoul."

All men may be conſidered as ſavages in this reſpect, until they are capable of inſtruction, and of uſing their faculties in a more perfect manner than ſavages do.

The rational converſations of birds and beaſts in ÆSOP's Fables do not ſhock the belief of children. They have that probability in them which we require in an epic poem. Poets give us a great deal of pleaſure, by clothing every object with intellectual and moral attributes, in metaphor and in other figures. May not the pleaſure which we take in this poetical language, ariſe, in part, from its correſpondence with our earlieſt ſentiments?

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However this may be, the Abbé RAYNAL's obſervation is ſufficiently confirmed, both from fact, and from the ſtructure of all languages.

Rude nations do really believe ſun, moon and ſtars, earth, ſea and air, fountains and lakes, to have underſtanding and active power. To pay homage to them and implore their favour, is a kind of idolatry natural to ſavages.

All languages carry in their ſtructure the marks of their being formed when this belief prevailed. The diſtinction of verbs and participles into active and paſſive, which is found in all languages, muſt have been originally intended to diſtinguiſh what is really active from what is merely paſſive; and, in all languages, we find active verbs applied to thoſe objects, in which, according to the Abbé RAYNAL's obſervation, ſavages ſuppoſe a ſoul.

Thus we ſay the ſun riſes and ſets, and comes to the meridian, the moon changes, the ſea ebbs and flows, the winds blow. Languages were formed by men who believed theſe objects to have life and active power in themſelves. It was therefore proper and natural to expreſs their motions and changes by active verbs.

There is no ſurer way of tracing the ſentiments of nations before they have records than by the ſtructure of their language, which, notwithſtanding the changes produced in it by time, will always retain ſome ſignatures of the thoughts of thoſe by whom it was invented. When we find the ſame ſentiments indicated in the ſtructure of all languages, thoſe ſentiments muſt have been common to the human ſpecies when languages were invented.

When a few of ſuperior intellectual abilities find leiſure for ſpeculation,

ſpeculation, they begin to philoſophize, and ſoon diſcover, that many of thoſe objects which, at firſt, they believed to be intelligent and active, are really lifeleſs and paſſive. This is a very important diſcovery. It elevates the mind, emancipates from many vulgar ſuperſtitions, and invites to farther diſcoveries of the ſame kind.

As philoſophy advances, life and activity in natural objects retires, and leaves them dead and inactive. Inſtead of moving voluntarily, we find them to be moved neceſſarily; inſtead of acting, we find them to be acted upon; and nature appears as one great machine, where one wheel is turned by another, that by a third; and how far this neceſſary ſucceſſion may reach, the Philoſopher does not know.

The weakneſs of human reaſon makes men prone, when they leave one extreme, to ruſh into the oppoſite; and thus philoſophy, even in its infancy, may lead men from idolatry and polytheiſm into atheiſm, and from aſcribing active power to inanimate beings, to conclude all things to be carried on by neceſſity.

Whatever origin we aſcribe to the doctrines of atheiſm and of fatal neceſſity, it is certain, that both may be traced almoſt as far back as philoſophy; and both appear to be the oppoſites of the earlieſt ſentiments of men.

It muſt have been by the obſervation and reaſoning of the ſpeculative *few*, that thoſe objects were diſcovered to be inanimate and inactive, to which the *many* aſcribed life and activity. But while the *few* are convinced of this, they muſt ſpeak the language of the *many* in order to be underſtood. So we ſee, that when the Ptolemaic ſyſtem of aſtronomy, which agrees with vulgar prejudice and with vulgar language, has been univerſally rejected by Philoſophers, they continue to uſe the phraſeology that is grounded upon it, not only in ſpeaking to the vul-

CHAP. III. gar, but in ſpeaking to one another. They ſay, The ſun riſes and ſets, and moves annually through all the ſigns of the zodiac, while they believe that he never leaves his place.

In like manner, thoſe active verbs and participles, which were applied to the inanimate objects of nature, when they were believed to be really active, continue to be applied to them after they are diſcovered to be paſſive.

The forms of language, once eſtabliſhed by cuſtom, are not ſo eaſily changed as the notions on which they were originally founded. While the ſounds remain, their ſignification is gradually enlarged or altered. This is ſometimes found, even in thoſe ſciences in which the ſignification of words is the moſt accurate and preciſe. Thus, in arithmetic, the word *number*, among the ancients, always ſignified ſo many units, and it would have been abſurd to apply it either to unity or to any part of an unit; but now we call unity, or any part of unity, a *number*. With them, multiplication always increaſed a number, and diviſion diminiſhed it; but we ſpeak of multiplying by a fraction, which diminiſhes, and of dividing by a fraction, which increaſes the number. We ſpeak of dividing or multiplying by unity, which neither diminiſhes nor increaſes a number. Theſe forms of expreſſion, in the ancient language, would have been abſurd.

By ſuch changes, in the meaning of words, the language of every civilized nation reſembles old furniture new modelled, in which many things are put to uſes for which they were not originally intended, and for which they are not perfectly fitted.

This is one great cauſe of the imperfection of language, and it appears very remarkably in thoſe verbs and participles which are active in their form, but are frequently uſed ſo as to have nothing active in their ſignification.

Hence

Hence we are authoriſed by cuſtom to aſcribe action and active power to things which we believe to be paſſive. The proper and original ſignification of every word, which at firſt ſignified action and cauſation, is buried and loſt under that vague meaning which cuſtom has affixed to it.

That there is a real diſtinction, and perfect oppoſition, between acting and being acted upon, every man may be ſatisfied who is capable of reflection. And that this diſtinction is perceived by all men as ſoon as they begin to reaſon, appears by the diſtinction between active and paſſive verbs, which is original in all languages, though, from the cauſes that have been mentioned, they come to be confounded in the progreſs of human improvement.

Another way in which philoſophy has contributed very much to the ambiguity of the words under our conſideration, deſerves to be mentioned.

The firſt ſtep into natural philoſophy, and what hath commonly been conſidered as its ultimate end, is the inveſtigation of the cauſes of the phænomena of nature; that is, the cauſes of thoſe appearances in nature which are not the effects of human power. *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas,* is the ſentiment of every mind that has a turn to ſpeculation.

The knowledge of the cauſes of things promiſes no leſs the enlargement of human power than the gratification of human curioſity; and therefore, among the enlightened part of mankind, this knowledge has been purſued in all ages with an avidity proportioned to its importance.

In nothing does the difference between the intellectual powers of man and thoſe of brutes appear more conſpicuous than in this. For in them we perceive no deſire to inveſtigate the cauſes

of

CHAP. III. of things, nor indeed any ſign that they have the proper notion of a cauſe.

There is reaſon, however, to apprehend, that, in this inveſtigation, men have wandered much in the dark, and that their ſucceſs has, by no means, been equal to their deſire and expectation.

We eaſily diſcover an eſtabliſhed order and connection in the phænomena of nature. We learn, in many caſes, from what has happened, to know what will happen. The diſcoveries of this kind, made by common obſervation, are many, and are the foundation of common prudence in the conduct of life. Philoſophers, by more accurate obſervation and experiment, have made many more; by which arts are improved, and human power, as well as human knowledge, is enlarged.

But, as to the real cauſes of the phænomena of nature, how little do we know! All our knowledge of things external, muſt be grounded upon the informations of our ſenſes; but cauſation and active power are not objects of ſenſe; nor is that always the cauſe of a phænomenon which is prior to it, and conſtantly conjoined with it; otherwiſe night would be the cauſe of day, and day the cauſe of the following night.

It is to this day problematical, whether all the phænomena of the material ſyſtem be produced by the immediate operation of the Firſt Cauſe, according to the laws which his wiſdom determined, or whether ſubordinate cauſes are employed by him in the operations of nature; and, if they be, what their nature, their number, and their different offices are? And whether, in all caſes, they act by commiſſion, or, in ſome, according to their diſcretion?

When we are ſo much in the dark with regard to the real cauſes

cauſes of the phænomena of nature, and have a ſtrong deſire to know them, it is not ſtrange, that ingenious men ſhould form numberleſs conjectures and theories, by which the ſoul, hungering for knowledge, is fed with chaff inſtead of wheat.

In a very ancient ſyſtem, love and ſtrife were made the cauſes of things. In the Pythagorean and Platonic ſyſtem, matter, ideas and an intelligent mind. By ARISTOTLE, matter, form and privation. DES CARTES thought that matter and a certain quantity of motion given at firſt by the Almighty, are ſufficient to account for all the phænomena of the natural world. LEIBNITZ, that the univerſe is made up of monades, active and precipient, which, by their active power received at firſt, produce all the changes they undergo.

While men thus wandered in the dark in ſearch of cauſes, unwilling to confeſs their diſappointment, they vainly conceived every thing they ſtumbled upon to be a cauſe, and the proper notion of a cauſe is loſt, by giving the name to numberleſs things which neither are nor can be cauſes.

This confuſion of various things under the name of cauſes, is the more eaſily tolerated, becauſe however hurtful it may be to ſound philoſophy, it has little influence upon the concerns of life. A conſtant antecedent, or concomitant of the phænomenon whoſe cauſe is ſought, may anſwer the purpoſe of the enquirer, as well as if the real cauſe were known. Thus a ſailor deſires to know the cauſe of the tides, that he may know when to expect high water: He is told that it is high water when the moon is ſo many hours paſt the meridian: And now he thinks he knows the cauſe of the tides. What he takes for the cauſe anſwers his purpoſe, and his miſtake does him no harm.

Thoſe philoſophers ſeem to have had the juſteſt views of nature, as well as of the weakneſs of human underſtanding, who, giving

CHAP. III. giving up the pretence of diſcovering the cauſes of the operations of nature, have applied themſelves to diſcover, by obſervation and experiment, the rules, or laws of nature according to which the phænomena of nature are produced.

In compliance with cuſtom, or perhaps, to gratify the avidity of knowing the cauſes of things, we call the laws of nature cauſes and active powers. So we ſpeak of the powers of gravitation, of magnetiſm, of electricity.

We call them cauſes of many of the phænomena of nature; and ſuch they are eſteemed by the ignorant, and by the half learned.

But thoſe of juſter diſcernment ſee, that laws of nature are not agents. They are not endowed with active power, and therefore cannot be cauſes in the proper ſenſe. They are only the rules according to which the unknown cauſe acts.

Thus it appears, that our natural deſire to know the cauſes of the phænomena of nature, our inability to diſcover them, and the vain theories of Philoſophers employed in this ſearch, have made the word *cauſe*, and the related words, ſo ambiguous, and to ſignify ſo many things of different natures, that they have in a manner loſt their proper and original meaning, and yet we have no other words to expreſs it.

Every thing joined with the effect, and prior to it, is called its cauſe. An inſtrument, an occaſion, a reaſon, a motive, an end, are called cauſes. And the related words *effect*, *agent*, *power*, are extended in the ſame vague manner.

Were it not that the terms *cauſe* and *agent* have loſt their proper meaning, in the crowd of meanings that have been given them,

them, we ſhould immediately perceive a contradiction in the terms *neceſſary cauſe* and *neceſſary agent*. And although the looſe meaning of thoſe words is authoriſed by cuſtom, the arbiter of language, and therefore cannot be cenſured, perhaps cannot always be avoided, yet we ought to be upon our guard, that we be not miſled by it to conceive things to be the ſame which are eſſentially different.

To ſay that man is a free agent, is no more than to ſay, that in ſome inſtances he is truly an agent, and a cauſe, and is not merely acted upon as a paſſive inſtrument. On the contrary, to ſay that he acts from neceſſity, is to ſay that he does not act at all, that he is no agent, and that, for any thing we know, there is only one agent in the univerſe, who does every thing that is done, whether it be good or ill.

If this neceſſity be attributed even to the Deity, the conſequence muſt be, that there neither is, nor can be, a cauſe at all; that nothing acts, but every thing is acted upon; nothing moves, but every thing is moved; all is paſſion without action; all inſtrument without an agent; and that every thing that is, or was, or ſhall be, has that neceſſary exiſtence in its ſeaſon, which we commonly conſider as the prerogative of the Firſt Cauſe.

This I take to be the genuine, and the moſt tenable ſyſtem of neceſſity. It was the ſyſtem of SPINOSA, though he was not the firſt that advanced it; for it is very ancient. And if this ſyſtem be true, our reaſoning to prove the exiſtence of a firſt cauſe of every thing that begins to exiſt, muſt be given up as fallacious.

If it be evident to the human underſtanding, as I take it to be, That what begins to exiſt muſt have an efficient cauſe, which had power to give or not to give it exiſtence; and if it be true,

CHAP. III. that effects well and wiſely fitted for the beſt purpoſes, demonſtrate intelligence, wiſdom, and goodneſs, in the efficient cauſe, as well as power, the proof of a Deity from theſe principles is very eaſy and obvious to all men that can reaſon.

If, on the other hand, our belief that every thing that begins to exiſt has a cauſe, be got only by experience; and if, as Mr HUME maintains, the only notion of a cauſe be ſomething prior to the effect, which experience has ſhewn to be conſtantly conjoined with ſuch an effect, I ſee not how, from theſe principles, it is poſſible to prove the exiſtence of an intelligent cauſe of the univerſe.

Mr HUME ſeems to me to reaſon juſtly from his definition of a cauſe, when, in the perſon of an Epicurean, he maintains, that with regard to a cauſe of the univerſe, we can conclude nothing; becauſe it is a ſingular effect. We have no experience that ſuch effects are always conjoined with ſuch a cauſe. Nay, the cauſe which we aſſign to this effect, is a cauſe which no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee, and therefore experience cannot inform us that it has ever been conjoined with any effect. He ſeems to me to reaſon juſtly from his definition of a cauſe, when he maintains, that *any thing* may be the cauſe of any thing; ſince priority and conſtant conjunction is all that can be conceived in the notion of a cauſe.

Another zealous defender of the doctrine of neceſſity ſays, that "A cauſe cannot be defined to be any thing but *ſuch previous* "*circumſtances as are conſtantly followed by a certain effect*, the *conſtancy* "of the reſult making us conclude, that there muſt be a *ſuffi-* "*cient reaſon*, in the nature of things, why it ſhould be produced "in thoſe circumſtances."

This ſeems to me to be Mr HUME's definition of a cauſe in other words, and neither more nor leſs; but I am far from thinking that the Author of it will admit the conſequences which

which Mr HUME draws from it, however neceſſary they may appear to others.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Influence of Motives.

THE modern advocates for the doctrine of neceſſity lay the ſtreſs of their cauſe upon the influence of motives.

"Every deliberate action, they ſay, muſt have a motive. "When there is no motive on the other ſide, this motive muſt "determine the agent: When there are contrary motives, the "ſtrongeſt muſt prevail: We reaſon from men's motives to "their actions, as we do from other cauſes to their effects: "If man be a free agent, and be not governed by motives, all "his actions muſt be mere caprice, rewards and puniſhments "can have no effect, and ſuch a being muſt be abſolutely ungo-"vernable."

In order therefore to underſtand diſtinctly, in what ſenſe we aſcribe moral liberty to man, it is neceſſary to underſtand what influence we allow to motives. To prevent miſunderſtanding, which has been very common upon this point, I offer the following obſervations:

1. I grant that all rational beings are influenced, and ought to be influenced by motives. But the influence of motives is of a very different nature from that of efficient cauſes. They are neither cauſes nor agents. They ſuppoſe an efficient cauſe, and can do nothing without it. We cannot, without abſurdity, ſuppoſe a motive, either to act, or to be acted upon; it is equally

CHAP. IV. incapable of action and of paſſion; becauſe it is not a thing that exiſts, but a thing that is conceived; it is what the ſchoolmen called an *ens rationis*. Motives, therefore, may *influence* to action, but they do not act. They may be compared to advice, or exhortation, which leaves a man ſtill at liberty. For in vain is advice given when there is not a power either to do, or to forbear what it recommends. In like manner, motives ſuppoſe liberty in the agent, otherwiſe they have no influence at all.

It is a law of nature, with reſpect to matter, That every motion, and change of motion, is proportional to the force impreſſed, and in the direction of that force. The ſcheme of neceſſity ſuppoſes a ſimilar law to obtain in all the actions of intelligent beings; which, with little alteration, may be expreſſed thus: Every action, or change of action, in an intelligent being, is proportional to the force of motives impreſſed, and in the direction of that force.

The law of nature reſpecting matter, is grounded upon this principle: That matter is an inert, inactive ſubſtance, which does not act, but is acted upon; and the law of neceſſity muſt be grounded upon the ſuppoſition, That an intelligent being is an inert, inactive ſubſtance, which does not act, but is acted upon.

2. Rational beings, in proportion as they are wiſe and good, will act according to the beſt motives; and every rational being, who does otherwiſe, abuſes his liberty. The moſt perfect being, in every thing where there is a right and a wrong, a better and a worſe, always infallibly acts according to the beſt motives. This indeed is little elſe than an identical propoſition: For it is a contradiction to ſay, That a perfect being does what is wrong or unreaſonable. But to ſay, that he does not act freely, becauſe he always does what is beſt, is to ſay, That the

the proper uſe of liberty deſtroys liberty, and that liberty conſiſts only in its abuſe.

The moral perfection of the Deity conſiſts, not in having no power to do ill, otherwiſe, as Dr CLARK juſtly obſerves, there would be no ground to thank him for his goodneſs to us any more than for his eternity or immenſity; but his moral perfection conſiſts in this, that, when he has power to do every thing, a power which cannot be reſiſted, he exerts that power only in doing what is wiſeſt and beſt. To be ſubject to neceſſity is to have no power at all; for power and neceſſity are oppoſites. We grant, therefore, that motives have influence, ſimilar to that of advice or perſuaſion; but this influence is perfectly conſiſtent with liberty, and indeed ſuppoſes liberty.

3. Whether every deliberate action muſt have a motive, depends on the meaning we put upon the word *deliberate*. If, by a deliberate action, we mean an action wherein motives are weighed, which ſeems to be the original meaning of the word, ſurely there muſt be motives, and contrary motives, otherwiſe they could not be weighed. But if a deliberate action means only, as it commonly does, an action done by a cool and calm determination of the mind, with forethought and will, I believe there are innumerable ſuch actions done without a motive.

This muſt be appealed to every man's conſciouſneſs. I do many trifling actions every day, in which, upon the moſt careful reflection, I am conſcious of no motive; and to ſay that I may be influenced by a motive of which I am not conſcious, is, in the firſt place, an arbitrary ſuppoſition without any evidence, and then, it is to ſay, that I may be convinced by an argument which never entered into my thought.

Caſes frequently occur, in which an end, that is of ſome importance, may be anſwered equally well by any one of ſeveral different

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different means. In ſuch caſes, a man who intends the end finds not the leaſt difficulty in taking one of theſe means, though he be firmly perſuaded, that it has no title to be preferred to any of the others.

To ſay that this is a caſe that cannot happen, is to contradict the experience of mankind; for ſurely a man who has occaſion to lay out a ſhilling, or a guinea, may have two hundred that are of equal value, both to the giver and to the receiver, any one of which will anſwer his purpoſe equally well. To ſay, that, if ſuch a caſe ſhould happen, the man could not execute his purpoſe, is ſtill more ridiculous, though it have the authority of ſome of the ſchoolmen, who determined, that the aſs, between two equal bundles of hay, would ſtand ſtill till it died of hunger.

If a man could not act without a motive, he would have no power at all; for motives are not in our power; and he that has not power over a neceſſary mean, has not power over the end.

That an action, done without any motive, can neither have merit nor demerit, is much inſiſted on by the writers for neceſſity, and triumphantly, as if it were the very hinge of the controverſy. I grant it to be a ſelf-evident propoſition, and I know no author that ever denied it.*

How inſignificant ſoever, in moral eſtimation, the actions may be which are done without any motive, they are of moment in the queſtion concerning moral liberty. For, if there ever was any action of this kind, motives are not the ſole cauſes of human actions. And if we have the power of acting without a motive, that power, joined to a weaker motive, may counterbalance a ſtronger.

4. It

4. It can never be proved, That when there is a motive on one ſide only, that motive muſt determine the action.

According to the laws of reaſoning, the proof is incumbent on thoſe who hold the affirmative; and I have never ſeen a ſhadow of argument, which does not take for granted the thing in queſtion, to wit, that motives are the ſole cauſes of actions.

Is there no ſuch thing as wilfulneſs, caprice or obſtinacy, among mankind? If there be not, it is wonderful that they ſhould have names in all languages. If there be ſuch things, a ſingle motive, or even many motives, may be reſiſted.

5. When it is ſaid, that of contrary motives the ſtrongeſt always prevails, this can neither be affirmed nor denied with underſtanding, until we know diſtinctly what is meant by the ſtrongeſt motive.

I do not find, that thoſe who have advanced this as a ſelf-evident axiom, have ever attempted to explain what they mean by the ſtrongeſt motive, or have given any rule by which we may judge which of two motives is the ſtrongeſt.

How ſhall we know whether the ſtrongeſt motive always prevails, if we know not which is ſtrongeſt? There muſt be ſome teſt by which their ſtrength is to be tried, ſome balance in which they may be weighed, otherwiſe, to ſay that the ſtrongeſt motive always prevails, is to ſpeak without any meaning. We muſt therefore ſearch for this teſt or balance, ſince they who have laid ſo much ſtreſs upon this axiom, have left us wholly in the dark as to its meaning. I grant, that when the contrary motives are of the ſame kind, and differ only in quantity, it may be eaſy to ſay which is the ſtrongeſt. Thus a bribe of a thouſand pounds is a ſtronger motive than a bribe of a hundred pounds. But when the motives are of different kinds, as,

money

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money and fame, duty and worldly intereſt, health and ſtrength, riches and honour, by what rule ſhall we judge which is the ſtrongeſt motive?

Either we meaſure the ſtrength of motives, merely by their prevalence, or by ſome other ſtandard diſtinct from their prevalence.

If we meaſure their ſtrength merely by their prevalence, and by the ſtrongeſt motive mean only the motive that prevails, it will be true indeed that the ſtrongeſt motive prevails; but the propoſition will be identical, and mean no more than that the ſtrongeſt motive is the ſtrongeſt motive. From this ſurely no concluſion can be drawn.

If it ſhould be ſaid, That by the ſtrength of a motive is not meant its prevalence, but the cauſe of its prevalence; that we meaſure the cauſe by the effect, and from the ſuperiority of the effect conclude the ſuperiority of the cauſe, as we conclude that to be the heavieſt weight which bears down the ſcale: I anſwer, That, according to this explication of the axiom, it takes for granted that motives are the cauſes, and the ſole cauſes of actions. Nothing is left to the agent, but to be acted upon by the motives, as the balance is by the weights. The axiom ſuppoſes, that the agent does not act, but is acted upon; and, from this ſuppoſition, it is concluded that he does not act. This is to reaſon in a circle, or rather it is not reaſoning but begging the queſtion.

Contrary motives may very properly be compared to advocates pleading the oppoſite ſides of a cauſe at the bar. It would be very weak reaſoning to ſay, that ſuch an advocate is the moſt powerful pleader, becauſe ſentence was given on his ſide. The ſentence is in the power of the judge, not of the advocate. It is equally weak reaſoning, in proof of neceſſity, to ſay, ſuch a motive prevailed,

vailed, therefore it is the ſtrongeſt; ſince the defenders of liberty maintain that the determination was made by the man, and not by the motive. CHAP. IV

We are therefore brought to this iſſue, that unleſs ſome meaſure of the ſtrength of motives can be found diſtinct from their prevalence, it cannot be determined, whether the ſtrongeſt motive always prevails or not. If ſuch a meaſure can be found and applied, we may be able to judge of the truth of this maxim, but not otherwiſe.

Every thing that can be called a motive, is addreſſed either to the animal or to the rational part of our nature. Motives of the former kind are common to us with the brutes; thoſe of the latter are peculiar to rational beings. We ſhall beg leave, for diſtinction's ſake, to call the former, *animal* motives, and the latter, *rational*.

Hunger is a motive in a dog to eat; ſo is it in a man. According to the ſtrength of the appetite, it gives a ſtronger or a weaker impulſe to eat. And the ſame thing may be ſaid of every other appetite and paſſion. Such animal motives give an impulſe to the agent, to which he yields with eaſe; and, if the impulſe be ſtrong, it cannot be reſiſted without an effort which requires a greater or a leſs degree of ſelf-command. Such motives are not addreſſed to the rational powers. Their influence is immediately upon the will. We feel their influence, and judge of their ſtrength, by the conſcious effort which is neceſſary to reſiſt them.

When a man is acted upon by contrary motives of this kind, he finds it eaſy to yield to the ſtrongeſt. They are like two forces puſhing him in contrary directions. To yield to the ſtrongeſt, he needs only to be paſſive. By exerting his own force, he may reſiſt; but this requires an effort of which he is

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conſcious. The ſtrength of motives of this kind is perceived, not by our judgment, but by our feeling; and that is the ſtrongeſt of contrary motives, to which he can yield with eaſe, or which it requires an effort of ſelf-command to reſiſt; and this we may call the *animal teſt* of the ſtrength of motives.

If it be aſked, whether, in motives of this kind, the ſtrongeſt always prevails? I would anſwer, That in brute-animals I believe it does. They do not appear to have any ſelf-command; an appetite or paſſion in them is overcome only by a ſtronger contrary one. On this account, they are not accountable for their actions, nor can they be the ſubjects of law.

But in men who are able to exerciſe their rational powers, and have any degree of ſelf-command, the ſtrongeſt animal motive does not always prevail. The fleſh does not always prevail againſt the ſpirit, though too often it does. And if men were neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt animal motive, they could no more be accountable, or capable of being governed by law, than brutes are.

Let us next conſider rational motives, to which the name of *motive* is more commonly and more properly given. Their influence is upon the judgment, by convincing us that ſuch an action ought to be done, that it is our duty, or conducive to our real good, or to ſome end which we have determined to purſue.

They do not give a blind impulſe to the will as animal motives do. They convince, but they do not impel, unleſs, as may often happen, they excite ſome paſſion of hope, or fear, or deſire. Such paſſions may be excited by conviction, and may operate in its aid as other animal motives do. But there may be conviction without paſſion; and the conviction of what we ought to do, in order to ſome end which we have judged fit to be purſued, is what I call a *rational motive*.

Brutes,

Brutes, I think, cannot be influenced by ſuch motives. They have not the conception of *ought* and *ought not*. Children acquire theſe conceptions as their rational powers advance; and they are found in all of ripe age, who have the human faculties.

If there be any competition between rational motives, it is evident, that the ſtrongeſt, in the eye of reaſon, is that which it is moſt our duty and our real happineſs to follow. Our duty and our real happineſs are ends which are inſeparable; and they are the ends which every man, endowed with reaſon, is conſcious he ought to purſue in preference to all others. This we may call the *rational teſt* of the ſtrength of motives. A motive which is the ſtrongeſt, according to the animal teſt, may be, and very often is the weakeſt according to the rational.

The grand and the important competition of contrary motives is between the animal, on the one hand, and the rational on the other. This is the conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, upon the event of which the character of men depends.

If it be aſked, which of theſe is the ſtrongeſt motive? The anſwer is, That the firſt is commonly ſtrongeſt, when they are tried by the animal teſt. If it were not ſo, human life would be no ſtate of trial. It would not be a warfare, nor would virtue require any effort or ſelf-command. No man would have any temptation to do wrong. But, when we try the contrary motives by the rational teſt, it is evident, that the rational motive is always the ſtrongeſt.

And now, I think, it appears, that the ſtrongeſt motive, according to either of the teſts I have mentioned, does not always prevail.

In every wiſe and virtuous action, the motive that prevails is

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the ſtrongeſt according to the rational teſt, but commonly the weakeſt according to the animal. In every fooliſh, and in every vicious action, the motive that prevails is commonly the ſtrongeſt according to the animal teſt, but always the weakeſt according to the rational.

6. It is true, that we reaſon from men's motives to their actions, and, in many caſes, with great probability, but never with abſolute certainty. And to infer from this, that men are neceſſarily determined by motives, is very weak reaſoning.

For let us ſuppoſe, for a moment, that men have moral liberty, I would aſk, what uſe may they be expected to make of this liberty? It may ſurely be expected, that, of the various actions within the ſphere of their power, they will chuſe what pleaſes them moſt for the preſent, or what appears to be moſt for their real, though diſtant good. When there is a competition between theſe motives, the fooliſh will prefer preſent gratification; the wiſe the greater and more diſtant good.

Now, Is not this the very way in which we ſee men act? Is it not from the preſumption that they act in this way, that we reaſon from their motives to their actions? Surely it is. Is it not weak reaſoning, therefore, to argue, that men have not liberty, becauſe they act in that very way in which they would act if they had liberty? It would ſurely be more like reaſoning to draw the contrary concluſion from the ſame premiſes.

7. Nor is it better reaſoning to conclude, that, if men are not neceſſarily determined by motives, all their actions muſt be capricious.

To reſiſt the ſtrongeſt animal motives when duty requires, is ſo far from being capricious, that it is, in the higheſt degree, wiſe and virtuous. And we hope this is often done by good men.

To

To act againſt rational motives, muſt always be fooliſh, vicious, or capricious. And, it cannot be denied, that there are too many ſuch actions done. But is it reaſonable to conclude, that becauſe liberty may be abuſed by the fooliſh and the vicious, therefore it can never be put to its proper uſe, which is to act wiſely and virtuouſly?

8. It is equally unreaſonable to conclude, That if men are not neceſſarily determined by motives, rewards and puniſhments would have no effect. With wiſe men they will have their due effect; but not always with the fooliſh and the vicious.

Let us conſider what effect rewards and puniſhments do really, and in fact, produce, and what may be inferred from that effect, upon each of the oppoſite ſyſtems of liberty and of neceſſity.

I take it for granted that, in fact, the beſt and wiſeſt laws, both human and divine, are often tranſgreſſed, notwithſtanding the rewards and puniſhments that are annexed to them. If any man ſhould deny this fact, I know not how to reaſon with him.

From this fact, it may be inferred with certainty, upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity, That, in every inſtance of tranſgreſſion, the motive of reward or puniſhment was not of ſufficient ſtrength to produce obedience to the law. This implies a fault in the lawgiver; but there can be no fault in the tranſgreſſor, who acts mechanically by the force of motives. We might as well impute a fault to the balance, when it does not raiſe a weight of two pounds by the force of one pound.

Upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity, there can be neither reward nor puniſhment, in the proper ſenſe, as thoſe words imply good and ill deſert. Reward and puniſhment are only tools employ-

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ed to produce a mechanical effect. When the effect is not produced, the tool muſt be unfit or wrong applied.

Upon the ſuppoſition of liberty, rewards and puniſhments will have a proper effect upon the wiſe and the good; but not ſo upon the fooliſh and the vicious, when oppoſed by their animal paſſions or bad habits; and this is juſt what we ſee to be the fact. Upon this ſuppoſition the tranſgreſſion of the law implies no defect in the law, no fault in the lawgiver; the fault is ſolely in the tranſgreſſor. And it is upon this ſuppoſition only, that there can be either reward or puniſhment, in the proper ſenſe of the words, becauſe it is only on this ſuppoſition, that there can be good or ill deſert.

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Liberty conſiſtent with Government.

WHEN it is ſaid that liberty would make us abſolutely ungovernable by GOD or man; to underſtand the ſtrength of this concluſion, it is neceſſary to know diſtinctly what is meant by *government*. There are two kinds of government, very different in their nature. The one we may, for diſtinction's ſake, call *mechanical* government, the other *moral*. The firſt is the government of beings which have no active power, but are merely paſſive and acted upon; the ſecond, of intelligent and active beings.

An inſtance of mechanical government may be that of a maſter or commander of a ſhip at ſea. Suppoſing her ſkilfully built, and furniſhed with every thing proper for the deſtined voyage, to govern her properly for this purpoſe requires much art and attention: And, as every art has its rules, or laws, ſo has this.

But

But by whom are thoſe laws to be obeyed, or thoſe rules obſerved? not by the ſhip, ſurely, for ſhe is an inactive being, but by the governor. A ſailor may ſay that ſhe does not obey the rudder; and he has a diſtinct meaning when he ſays ſo, and is perfectly underſtood. But he means not obedience in the proper, but in a metaphorical ſenſe: For, in the proper ſenſe, the ſhip can no more obey the rudder, than ſhe can give a command. Every motion, both of the ſhip and rudder, is exactly proportioned to the force impreſſed, and in the direction of that force. The ſhip never diſobeys the laws of motion, even in the metaphorical ſenſe; and they are the only laws ſhe can be ſubject to.

The ſailor, perhaps, curſes her for not obeying the rudder; but this is not the voice of reaſon, but of paſſion, like that of the loſing gameſter, when he curſes the dice. The ſhip is as innocent as the dice.

Whatever may happen during the voyage, whatever may be its iſſue, the ſhip, in the eye of reaſon, is neither an object of approbation nor of blame; becauſe ſhe does not act, but is acted upon. If the material, in any part, be faulty; Who put it to that uſe? If the form; Who made it? If the rules of navigation were not obſerved; Who tranſgreſſed them? If a ſtorm occaſioned any diſaſter, it was no more in the power of the ſhip than of the maſter.

Another inſtance to illuſtrate the nature of mechanical government may be, That of the man who makes and exhibits a puppet-ſhow. The puppets, in all their diverting geſticulations, do not move, but are moved by an impulſe ſecretly conveyed, which they cannot reſiſt. If they do not play their parts properly, the fault is only in the maker or manager of the machinery. Too much or too little force was applied, or it was wrong directed.

No-

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If we ſuppoſe for a moment, the puppets to be endowed with underſtanding and will, but without any degree of active power, this will make no change in the nature of their government: For underſtanding and will, without ſome degree of active power, can produce no effect. They might, upon this ſuppoſition, be called *intelligent machines*; but they would be machines ſtill as much ſubject to the laws of motion as inanimate matter, and therefore incapable of any other than mechanical government.

Let us next conſider the nature of moral government. This is the government of perſons who have reaſon and active power, and have laws preſcribed to them for their conduct, by a legiſlator. Their obedience is obedience in the proper ſenſe; it muſt therefore be their own act and deed, and conſequently they muſt have power to obey or to diſobey. To preſcribe laws to them which they have not power to obey, or to require a ſervice beyond their power, would be tyranny and injuſtice in the higheſt degree.

When the laws are equitable, and preſcribed by juſt authority, they produce moral obligation in thoſe that are ſubject to them, and diſobedience is a crime deſerving puniſhment. But if the obedience be impoſſible; if the tranſgreſſion be neceſſary; it is ſelf-evident, that there can be no moral obligation to what is impoſſible, that there can be no crime in yielding to neceſſity, and that there can be no juſtice in puniſhing a perſon for what it was not in his power to avoid. There are firſt principles in morals, and, to every unprejudiced mind, as ſelf-evident as the axioms of mathematics. The whole ſcience of morals muſt ſtand or fall with them.

Having thus explained the nature both of mechanical and of moral

moral government, the only kinds of government I am able to conceive, it is eaſy to ſee how far liberty or neceſſity agrees with either.

On the one hand, I acknowledge that neceſſity agrees perfectly with mechanical government. This kind of government is moſt perfect when the governor is the ſole agent; every thing done is the doing of the governor only. The praiſe of every thing well done is his ſolely; and his is the blame if there be any thing ill done, becauſe he is the ſole agent.

It is true that, in common language, praiſe or diſpraiſe is often metaphorically given to the work; but, in propriety, it belongs ſolely to the author. Every workman underſtands this perfectly, and takes to himſelf very juſtly the praiſe or diſpraiſe of his own work.

On the other hand, it is no leſs evident, that, on the ſuppoſition of neceſſity in the governed, there can be no moral government. There can be neither wiſdom nor equity in preſcribing laws that cannot be obeyed. There can be no moral obligation upon beings that have no active power. There can be no crime in not doing what it was impoſſible to do; nor can there be juſtice in puniſhing ſuch omiſſion.

If we apply theſe theoretical principles to the kinds of government which do actually exiſt, whether human or divine, we ſhall find that, among men, even mechanical government is imperfect.

Men do not make the matter they work upon. Its various kinds, and the qualities belonging to each kind, are the work of GOD. The laws of nature, to which it is ſubject, are the work of GOD. The motions of the atmoſphere and of the ſea, the heat and cold of the air, the rain and wind, which are uſe-

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ful inſtruments in moſt human operations, are not in our power. So that, in all the mechanical productions of men, the work is more to be aſcribed to GOD than to man.

Civil government among men is a ſpecies of moral government, but imperfect, as its lawgivers and its judges are. Human laws may be unwiſe or unjuſt; human judges may be partial or unſkilful. But in all equitable civil governments, the maxims of moral government above mentioned, are acknowledged as rules which ought never to be violated. Indeed the rules of juſtice are ſo evident to all men, that the moſt tyrannical governments profeſs to be guided by them, and endeavour to palliate what is contrary to them by the plea of neceſſity.

That a man cannot be under an obligation to what is impoſſible; that he cannot be criminal in yielding to neceſſity, nor juſtly puniſhed for what he could not avoid, are maxims admitted, in all criminal courts, as fundamental rules of juſtice.

In oppoſition to this, it has been ſaid by ſome of the moſt able defenders of neceſſity, That human laws require no more to conſtitute a crime, but that it be voluntary; whence it is inferred that the criminality conſiſts in the determination of the will, whether that determination be free or neceſſary. This, I think indeed, is the only poſſible plea by which criminality can be made conſiſtent with neceſſity, and therefore it deſerves to be conſidered.

I acknowledge that a crime muſt be voluntary; for, if it be not voluntary, it is no deed of the man, nor can be juſtly imputed to him; but it is no leſs neceſſary that the criminal have moral liberty. In men that are adult, and of a ſound mind, this liberty is preſumed. But in every caſe where it cannot be preſumed, no criminality is imputed, even to voluntary actions.

This

This is evident from the following inſtances: *Firſt*, The actions of brutes appear to be voluntary; yet they are never conceived to be criminal, though they may be noxious. *Secondly*, Children in nonage act voluntarily, but they are not chargeable with crimes. *Thirdly*, Madmen have both underſtanding and will, but they have not moral liberty, and therefore are not chargeable with crimes. *Fourthly*, Even in men that are adult, and of a ſound mind, a motive that is thought irreſiſtible by any ordinary degree of ſelf-command, ſuch as the rack, or the dread of preſent death, either exculpates, or very much alleviates a voluntary action, which, in other circumſtances, would be highly criminal; whence it is evident, that if the motive were abſolutely irreſiſtible, the exculpation would be complete. So far is it from being true in itſelf, or agreeable to the common ſenſe of mankind, that the criminality of an action depends ſolely upon its being voluntary.

The government of brutes, ſo far as they are ſubject to man, is a ſpecies of mechanical government, or ſomething very like to it, and has no reſemblance to moral government. As inanimate matter is governed by our knowledge of the qualities which GOD hath given to the various productions of nature, and our knowledge of the laws of nature which he hath eſtabliſhed; ſo brute-animals are governed by our knowledge of the natural inſtincts, appetites, affections and paſſions, which GOD hath given them. By a ſkilful application of theſe ſprings of their actions, they may be trained to many habits uſeful to man. After all, we find that, from cauſes unknown to us, not only ſome ſpecies, but ſome individuals of the ſame ſpecies, are more tractable than others.

Children under age are governed much in the ſame way as the moſt ſagacious brutes. The opening of their intellectual and moral powers, which may be much aided by proper inſtruc-

CHAP. V. tion and example, is that which makes them by degrees, capable of moral government.

Reaſon teaches us to aſcribe to the Supreme Being a government of the inanimate and inactive part of his creation, analogous to that mechanical government which men exerciſe, but infinitely more perfect. This, I think, is what we call GOD's *natural* government of the univerſe. In this part of the divine government, whatever is done is GOD's doing. He is the ſole cauſe, and the ſole agent, whether he act immediately, or by inſtruments ſubordinate to him; and his will is always done: For inſtruments are not cauſes, they are not agents, though we ſometimes improperly call them ſo.

It is therefore no leſs agreeable to reaſon, than to the language of holy writ, to impute to the Deity whatever is done in the natural world. When we ſay of any thing, that it is the work of nature, this is ſaying that it is the work of GOD, and can have no other meaning.

The natural world is a grand machine, contrived, made, and governed by the wiſdom and power of the Almighty: And if there be in this natural world, beings that have life, intelligence, and will, without any degree of active power, they can only be ſubject to the ſame kind of mechanical government. Their determinations, whether we call them good or ill, muſt be the actions of the Supreme Being, as much as the productions of the earth: For, life, intelligence, and will, without active power, can do nothing, and therefore nothing can juſtly be imputed to it.

This grand machine of the natural world, diſplays the power and wiſdom of the artificer. But in it, there can be no diſplay of moral attributes, which have a relation to moral conduct in his creatures, ſuch as juſtice and equity in rewarding or puniſhing,

ing, the love of virtue and abhorrence of wickedneſs: For, as every thing in it is GOD's doing, there can be no vice to be puniſhed or abhorred, no virtue in his creatures to be rewarded.

According to the ſyſtem of neceſſity, the whole univerſe of creatures is this natural world; and of every thing done in it, GOD is the ſole agent. There can be no moral government, nor moral obligation. Laws, rewards, and puniſhments, are only mechanical engines, and the will of the lawgiver is obeyed as much when his laws are tranſgreſſed, as when they are obſerved. Such muſt be our notions of the government of the world, upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity. It muſt be purely mechanical, and there can be no moral government upon that hypotheſis.

Let us conſider, on the other hand, what notion of the divine government we are naturally led into by the ſuppoſition of liberty.

They who adopt this ſyſtem conceive, that in that ſmall portion of the univerſe which falls under our view, as a great part has no active power, but moves, as it is moved, by neceſſity, and therefore muſt be ſubject to a mechanical government, ſo it has pleaſed the Almighty to beſtow upon ſome of his creatures, particularly upon man, ſome degree of active power, and of reaſon, to direct him to the right uſe of his power.

What connection there may be, in the nature of things, between reaſon and active power, we know not. But we ſee evidently that, as reaſon without active power can do nothing, ſo active power without reaſon has no guide to direct it to any end.

Theſe two conjoined make moral liberty, which, in how ſmall a degree ſoever it is poſſeſſed, raiſes man to a ſuperior rank in the

CHAP. V. the creation of GOD. He is not merely a tool in the hand of the maſter, but a ſervant, in the proper ſenſe, who has a certain truſt, and is accountable for the diſcharge of it. Within the ſphere of his power, he has a ſubordinate dominion or government, and therefore may be ſaid to be made after the image of GOD, the Supreme Governor. But as his dominion is ſubordinate, he is under a moral obligation to make a right uſe of it, as far as the reaſon which GOD hath given him can direct him. When he does ſo, he is a juſt object of moral approbation; and no leſs an object of diſapprobation and juſt puniſhment when he abuſes the power with which he is entruſted. And he muſt finally render an account of the talent committed to him, to the ſupreme Governor and righteous Judge.

This is the moral government of GOD, which, far from being inconſiſtent with liberty, ſuppoſes liberty in thoſe that are ſubject to it, and can extend no farther than that liberty extends; for accountableneſs can no more agree with neceſſity than light with darkneſs.

It ought likewiſe to be obſerved, that as active power in man, and in every created being, is the gift of GOD, it depends entirely on his pleaſure for its exiſtence, its degree and its continuance, and therefore can do nothing which he does not ſee fit to permit.

Our power to act does not exempt us from being acted upon, and reſtrained or compelled by a ſuperior power; and the power of GOD is always ſuperior to that of man.

It would be great folly and preſumption in us to pretend to know all the ways in which the government of the Supreme Being is carried on, and his purpoſes accompliſhed by men, acting freely, and having different or oppoſite purpoſes in their view. For, as the heavens are high above the earth, ſo are his thoughts above our thoughts, and his ways above our ways.

That

That a man may have great influence upon the voluntary determinations of other men, by means of education, example and perſuaſion, is a fact which muſt be granted, whether we adopt the ſyſtem of liberty or neceſſity. How far ſuch determinations ought to be imputed to the perſon who applied thoſe means, how far to the perſon influenced by them, we know not, but God knows, and will judge righteouſly.

But what I would here obſerve is, That if a man of ſuperior talents may have ſo great influence over the actions of his fellow-creatures, without taking away their liberty, it is ſurely reaſonable to allow a much greater influence of the ſame kind to him who made man. Nor can it ever be proved, that the wiſdom and power of the Almighty are inſufficient for governing free agents, ſo as to anſwer his purpoſes.

He who made man may have ways of governing his determinations, conſiſtent with moral liberty, of which we have no conception. And he who gave this liberty freely, may lay any reſtraint upon it that is neceſſary for anſwering his wiſe and benevolent purpoſes. The juſtice of his government requires, that his creatures ſhould be accountable only for what they have received, and not for what was never entruſted to them. And we are ſure that the Judge of all the earth will do what is right.

Thus, I think, it appears, that, upon the ſuppoſition of neceſſity, there can be no moral government of the univerſe. Its government muſt be perfectly mechanical, and every thing done in it, whether good or ill, muſt be God's doing; and that, upon the ſuppoſition of liberty, there may be a perfect moral government of the univerſe, conſiſtent with his accompliſhing all his purpoſes, in its creation and government.

The arguments to prove that man is endowed with moral liberty, which have the greateſt weight with me, are three: *Firſt*, Becauſe

CHAP. VI. Becauſe he has a natural conviction or belief, that, in many caſes, he acts freely; *ſecondly*, Becauſe he is accountable; and, *thirdly*, Becauſe he is able to proſecute an end by a long ſeries of means adapted to it.

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Firſt Argument.

WE have, by our conſtitution, a natural conviction or belief that we act freely: A conviction ſo early, ſo univerſal and ſo neceſſary in moſt of our rational operations, that it muſt be the reſult of our conſtitution, and the work of him that made us.

Some of the moſt ſtrenuous advocates for the doctrine of neceſſity acknowledge that it is impoſſible to act upon it. They ſay that we have a natural ſenſe or conviction that we act freely, but that this is a fallacious ſenſe.

This doctrine is diſhonourable to our Maker, and lays a foundation for univerſal ſcepticiſm. It ſuppoſes the Author of our being to have given us one faculty on purpoſe to deceive us, and another by which we may detect the fallacy, and find that he impoſed upon us.

If any one of our natural faculties be fallacious, there can be no reaſon to truſt to any of them; for he that made one made all.

The genuine dictate of our natural faculties is the voice of GOD, no leſs than what he reveals from heaven; and to ſay that it is fallacious is to impute a lie to the GOD of truth.

If

If candour and veracity be not an eſſential part of moral excellence, there is no ſuch thing as moral excellence, nor any reaſon to rely on the declarations and promiſes of the Almighty. A man may be tempted to lie, but not without being conſcious of guilt and of meanneſs. Shall we impute to the Almighty what we cannot impute to a man without a heinous affront?

Paſſing this opinion, therefore, as ſhocking to an ingenuous mind, and, in its conſequences, ſubverſive of all religion, all morals and all knowledge, let us proceed to conſider the evidence of our having a natural conviction that we have ſome degree of active power.

The very conception or idea of active power muſt be derived from ſomething in our own conſtitution. It is impoſſible to account for it otherwiſe. We ſee events, but we ſee not the power that produces them. We perceive one event to follow another, but we perceive not the chain that binds them together. The notion of power and cauſation, therefore, cannot be got from external objects.

Yet the notion of cauſes, and the belief that every event muſt have a cauſe which had power to produce it, is found in every human mind ſo firmly eſtabliſhed, that it cannot be rooted out.

This notion and this belief muſt have its origin from ſomething in our conſtitution; and that it is natural to man, appears from the following obſervations.

1. We are conſcious of many voluntary exertions, ſome eaſy, others more difficult, ſome requiring a great effort. Theſe are exertions of power. And though a man may be unconſcious of his power when he does not exert it, he muſt have both the con-

CHAP. VI. ception and the belief of it, when he knowingly and willingly exerts it, with intention to produce ſome effect.

2. Deliberation about an action of moment, whether we ſhall do it or not, implies a conviction that it is in our power. To deliberate about an end, we muſt be convinced that the means are in our power; and to deliberate about the means, we muſt be convinced that we have power to chuſe the moſt proper.

3. Suppoſe our deliberation brought to an iſſue, and that we reſolve to do what appeared proper, Can we form ſuch a reſolution or purpoſe, without any conviction of power to execute it? No; it is impoſſible. A man cannot reſolve to lay out a ſum of money, which he neither has, nor hopes ever to have.

4. Again, when I plight my faith in any promiſe or contract, I muſt believe that I ſhall have power to perform what I promiſe. Without this perſuaſion, a promiſe would be downright fraud.

There is a condition implied in every promiſe, *if we live*, and *if* GOD *continue with us the power which he hath given us.* Our conviction, therefore, of this power derogates not in the leaſt from our dependence upon GOD. The rudeſt ſavage is taught by nature to admit this condition in all promiſes, whether it be expreſſed or not. For it is a dictate of common ſenſe, that we can be under no obligation to do what it is impoſſible for us to do.

If we act upon the ſyſtem of neceſſity, there muſt be another condition implied in all deliberation, in every reſolution, and in every promiſe; and that is, *if we ſhall be willing.* But the will not being in our power, we cannot engage for it.

If this condition be underſtood, as it muſt be underſtood if we act

act upon the ſyſtem of neceſſity, there can be no deliberation, or reſolution, nor any obligation in a promiſe. A man might as well deliberate, reſolve and promiſe, upon the actions of other men as upon his own. CHAP. VI.

It is no leſs evident, that we have a conviction of power in other men, when we adviſe, or perſuade, or command, or conceive them to be under obligation by their promiſes.

5. Is it poſſible for any man to blame himſelf for yielding to neceſſity? Then he may blame himſelf for dying, or for being a man. Blame ſuppoſes a wrong uſe of power; and when a man does as well as it was poſſible for him to do, wherein is he to be blamed? Therefore all conviction of wrong conduct, all remorſe and ſelf-condemnation, imply a conviction of our power to have done better. Take away this conviction, and there may be a ſenſe of miſery, or a dread of evil to come, but there can be no ſenſe of guilt or reſolution to do better.

Many who hold the doctrine of neceſſity diſown theſe conſequences of it, and think to evade them. To ſuch they ought not to be imputed; but their inſeparable connection with that doctrine appears ſelf-evident: And therefore ſome late patrons of it have had the boldneſs to avow them. "They cannot ac-" cuſe themſelves of having done any thing wrong in the ulti-" mate ſenſe of the words. In a ſtrict ſenſe, they have nothing " to do with repentance, confeſſion and pardon, theſe being " adapted to a fallacious view of things."

Thoſe who can adopt theſe ſentiments, may indeed celebrate, with high encomiums, *the great and glorious doctrine of neceſſity*. It reſtores them, in their own conceit, to the ſtate of innocence. It delivers them from all the pangs of guilt and remorſe, and from all fear about their future conduct, though not about their fate. They may be as ſecure that they ſhall do no-

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thing wrong, as thoſe who have finiſhed their courſe. A doctrine ſo flattering to the mind of a ſinner is very apt to give ſtrength to weak arguments.

After all, it is acknowledged by thoſe who boaſt of this glorious doctrine, "That every man, let him uſe what efforts he "can, will neceſſarily feel the ſentiments of ſhame, remorſe, "and repentance, and, oppreſſed with a ſenſe of guilt, will "have recourſe to that mercy of which he ſtands in need."

The meaning of this ſeems to me to be, That although the doctrine of neceſſity be ſupported by invincible arguments, and though it be the moſt conſolatory doctrine in the world; yet no man, in his moſt ſerious moments, when he ſifts himſelf before the throne of his Maker, can poſſibly believe it, but muſt then neceſſarily lay aſide this glorious doctrine, and all its flattering conſequences, and return to the humiliating conviction of his having made a bad uſe of the power which God had given him.

If the belief of our having active power be neceſſarily implied in thoſe rational operations we have mentioned, it muſt be coeval with our reaſon; it muſt be as univerſal among men, and as neceſſary in the conduct of life, as thoſe operations are.

We cannot recollect by memory when it began. It cannot be a prejudice of education, or of falſe philoſophy. It muſt be a part of our conſtitution, or the neceſſary reſult of our conſtitution, and therefore the work of God.

It reſembles, in this reſpect, our belief of the exiſtence of a material world; our belief that thoſe we converſe with are living and intelligent beings; our belief that thoſe things did really happen which we diſtinctly remember, and our belief that we continue the ſame identical perſons.

We

We find difficulty in accounting for our belief of theſe things; and ſome Philoſophers think, that they have diſcovered good reaſons for throwing it off. But it ſticks faſt, and the greateſt ſceptic finds, that he muſt yield to it in his practice, while he wages war with it in ſpeculation.

If it be objected to this argument, That the belief of our acting freely cannot be implied in the operations we have mentioned, becauſe thoſe operations are performed by them who believe, that we are, in all our actions, governed by neceſſity. The anſwer to this objection is, That men in their practice may be governed by a belief which in ſpeculation they reject.

However ſtrange and unaccountable this may appear, there are many well known inſtances of it.

I knew a man who was as much convinced as any man of the folly of the popular belief of apparitions in the dark, yet he could not ſleep in a room alone, nor go alone into a room in the dark. Can it be ſaid, that his fear did not imply a beleif of danger? This is impoſſible. Yet his philoſophy convinced him, that he was in no more danger in the dark when alone, than with company.

Here an unreaſonable belief, which was merely a prejudice of the nurſery, ſtuck ſo faſt as to govern his conduct, in oppoſition to his ſpeculative belief as a Philoſopher and a man of ſenſe.

There are few perſons who can look down from the battlement of a very high tower without fear, while their reaſon convinces them that they are in no more danger than when ſtanding upon the ground.

There have been perſons who profeſſed to believe that there

is

CHAP. VI. is no diſtinction between virtue and vice, yet in their practice they reſented injuries, and eſteemed noble and virtuous actions.

There have been ſceptics who profeſſed to diſbelieve their ſenſes, and every human faculty; but no ſceptic was ever known, who did not, in practice, pay a regard to his ſenſes and to his other faculties.

There are ſome points of belief ſo neceſſary, that, without them, a man would not be the being which GOD made him. Theſe may be oppoſed in ſpeculation, but it is impoſſible to root them out. In a ſpeculative hour they ſeem to vaniſh, but in practice they reſume their authority. This ſeems to be the caſe of thoſe who hold the doctrine of neceſſity, and yet act as if they were free.

This natural conviction of ſome degree of power in ourſelves and in other men, reſpects voluntary actions only. For as all our power is directed by our will, we can form no conception of power, properly ſo called, that is not under the direction of will. And therefore our exertions, our deliberations, our purpoſes, our promiſes, are only in things that depend upon our will. Our advices, exhortations and commands, are only in things that depend upon the will of thoſe to whom they are addreſſed. We impute no guilt to ourſelves, nor to others, in things where the will is not concerned.

But it deſerves our notice, that we do not conceive every thing, without exception, to be in a man's power which depends upon his will. There are many exceptions to this general rule. The moſt obvious of theſe I ſhall mention, becauſe they both ſerve to illuſtrate the rule, and are of importance in the queſtion concerning the liberty of man.

In the rage of madneſs, men are abſolutely deprived of the power

power of ſelf-government. They act voluntarily, but their will is driven as by a tempeſt, which, in lucid intervals, they reſolve to oppoſe with all their might, but are overcome when the fit of madneſs returns. CHAP. VI.

Idiots are like men walking in the dark, who cannot be ſaid to have the power of chuſing their way, becauſe they cannot diſtinguiſh the good road from the bad. Having no light in their underſtanding, they muſt either ſit ſtill, or be carried on by ſome blind impulſe.

Between the darkneſs of infancy, which is equal to that of idiots, and the maturity of reaſon, there is a long twilight, which, by inſenſible degrees, advances to the perfect day.

In this period of life, man has but little of the power of ſelf-government. His actions, by nature, as well as by the laws of ſociety, are in the power of others more than in his own. His folly and indiſcretion, his levity and inconſtancy, are conſidered as the fault of youth, rather than of the man. We conſider him as half a man and half a child, and expect that each by turns ſhould play its part. He would be thought a ſevere and unequitable cenſor of manners, who required the ſame cool deliberation, the ſame ſteady conduct, and the ſame maſtery over himſelf in a boy of thirteen, as in a man of thirty.

It is an old adage, That violent anger is a ſhort fit of madneſs. If this be literally true in any caſe, a man, in ſuch a fit of paſſion, cannot be ſaid to have the command of himſelf. If real madneſs could be proved, it muſt have the effect of madneſs while it laſts, whether it be for an hour or for life. But the madneſs of a ſhort fit of paſſion, if it be really madneſs, is incapable of proof; and therefore is not admitted in human tribunals as an exculpation. And, I believe, there is no caſe where a man can ſatisfy his own mind that his paſſion, both in its beginning

CHAP. VI. ginning and in its progreſs, was irreſiſtible. The Searcher of hearts alone knows infallibly what allowance is due in caſes of this kind.

But a violent paſſion, though it may not be irreſiſtible, is difficult to be reſiſted: And a man, ſurely, has not the ſame power over himſelf in paſſion, as when he is cool. On this account it is allowed by all men to alleviate, when it cannot exculpate; and has its weight in criminal courts, as well as in private judgment.

It ought likewiſe to be obſerved, That he who has accuſtomed himſelf to reſtrain his paſſions, enlarges by habit his power over them, and conſequently over himſelf. When we conſider that a Canadian ſavage can acquire the power of defying death, in its moſt dreadful forms, and of braving the moſt exquiſite torment for many long hours, without loſing the command of himſelf; we may learn from this, that, in the conſtitution of human nature, there is ample ſcope for the enlargement of that power of ſelf-command, without which there can be no virtue nor magnanimity.

There are caſes, however, in which a man's voluntary actions are thought to be very little, if at all, in his power, on account of the violence of the motive that impels him. The magnanimity of a hero, or of a martyr, is not expected in every man, and on all occaſions.

If a man truſted, by the government, with a ſecret, which it is high treaſon to diſcloſe, be prevailed upon by a bribe, we have no mercy for him, and hardly allow the greateſt bribe to be any alleviation of his crime.

But, on the other hand, if the ſecret be extorted by the rack, or by the dread of preſent death, we pity him more than we blame

blame him, and would think it ſevere and unequitable to condemn him as a traitor. CHAP. VI.

What is the reaſon that all men agree in condemning this man as a traitor in the firſt caſe, and in the laſt, either exculpate him, or think his fault greatly alleviated? If he acted neceſſarily in both caſes, compelled by an irreſiſtible motive, I can ſee no reaſon why we ſhould not paſs the ſame judgment on both.

But the reaſon of theſe different judgments is evidently this, That the love of money, and of what is called a man's intereſt, is a cool motive, which leaves to a man the entire power over himſelf: But the torment of the rack, or the dread of preſent death, are ſo violent motives, that men, who have not uncommon ſtrength of mind, are not maſters of themſelves in ſuch a ſituation, and therefore what they do is not imputed, or is thought leſs criminal.

If a man reſiſt ſuch motives, we admire his fortitude, and think his conduct heroical rather than human. If he yields, we impute it to human frailty, and think him rather to be pitied than ſeverely cenſured.

Inveterate habits are acknowledged to diminiſh very conſiderably the power a man has over himſelf. Although we may think him highly blameable in acquiring them, yet, when they are confirmed to a certain degree, we conſider him as no longer maſter of himſelf, and hardly reclaimable without a miracle.

Thus we ſee, that the power which we are led, by common ſenſe, to aſcribe to man, reſpects his voluntary actions only, and that it has various limitations even with regard to them. Some actions that depend upon our will are eaſy, others very difficult, and ſome, perhaps, beyond our power. In different men, the

CHAP. VI. power of ſelf-government is different, and in the ſame man at different times. It may be diminiſhed, or perhaps loſt, by bad habits; it may be greatly increaſed by good habits.

Theſe are facts atteſted by experience, and ſupported by the common judgment of mankind. Upon the ſyſtem of liberty, they are perfectly intelligible; but, I think, irreconcileable to that of neceſſity; for, How can there be an eaſy and a difficult in actions equally ſubject to neceſſity? or, How can power be greater or leſs, increaſed or diminiſhed, in thoſe who have no power?

This natural conviction of our acting freely, which is acknowledged by many who hold the doctrine of neceſſity, ought to throw the whole burden of proof upon that ſide: For, by this, the ſide of liberty has what lawyers call a *jus quæſitum*, or a right of ancient poſſeſſion, which ought to ſtand good till it be overturned. If it cannot be proved that we always act from neceſſity, there is no need of arguments on the other ſide to convince us that we are free agents.

To illuſtrate this by a ſimilar caſe: If a Philoſopher would perſuade me, that my fellow-men with whom I converſe, are not thinking intelligent beings, but mere machines, though I might be at a loſs to find arguments againſt this ſtrange opinion, I ſhould think it reaſonable to hold the belief which nature gave me before I was capable of weighing evidence, until convincing proof is brought againſt it.

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Second Argument.

THAT there is a real and eſſential diſtinction between right and wrong conduct, between juſt and unjuſt; that the moſt perfect moral rectitude is to be aſcribed to the Deity; that man is a moral and accountable being, capable of acting right and wrong, and anſwerable for his conduct to him who made him, and aſſigned him a part to act upon the ſtage of life; are principles proclaimed by every man's conſcience; principles upon which the ſyſtems of morality and natural religion, as well as the ſyſtem of revelation, are grounded, and which have been generally acknowledged by thoſe who hold contrary opinions on the ſubject of human liberty. I ſhall therefore here take them for granted.

Theſe principles afford an obvious, and, I think, an invincible argument, that man is endowed with moral liberty.

Two things are implied in the notion of a moral and accountable being; underſtanding and active power.

Firſt, He muſt underſtand the law to which he is bound, and his obligation to obey it. Moral obedience muſt be voluntary, and muſt regard the authority of the law. I may command my horſe to eat when he hungers, and drink when he thirſts. He does ſo; but his doing it is no moral obedience. He does not underſtand my command, and therefore can have no will to obey it. He has not the conception of moral obligation, and therefore cannot act from the conviction of it. In eating and drinking he is moved by his own appetite only, and not by my authority.

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Brute-animals are incapable of moral obligation, becauſe they have not that degree of underſtanding which it implies. They have not the conception of a rule of conduct, and of obligation to obey it, and therefore, though they may be noxious, they cannot be criminal.

Man, by his rational nature, is capable both of underſtanding the law that is preſcribed to him, and of perceiving its obligation. He knows what it is to be juſt and honeſt, to injure no man, and to obey his Maker. From his conſtitution, he has an immediate conviction of his obligation to theſe things. He has the approbation of his conſcience when he acts by theſe rules; and he is conſcious of guilt and demerit when he tranſgreſſes them. And, without this knowledge of his duty and his obligation, he would not be a moral and accountable being.

Secondly, Another thing implied in the notion of a moral and accountable being, is power to do what he is accountable for.

That no man can be under a moral obligation to do what it is impoſſible for him to do, or to forbear what it is impoſſible for him to forbear, is an axiom as ſelf-evident as any in mathematics. It cannot be contradicted, without overturning all notion of moral obligation; nor can there be any exception to it, when it is rightly underſtood.

Some moraliſts have mentioned what they conceive to be an exception to this maxim. The exception is this. When a man, by his own fault, has diſabled himſelf from doing his duty, his obligation, they ſay, remains, though he is now unable to diſcharge it. Thus, if a man by ſumptuous living has become bankrupt, his inability to pay his debt does not take away his obligation.

To

To judge whether, in this and ſimilar caſes, there be any exception to the axiom above mentioned, they muſt be ſtated accurately.

No doubt a man is highly criminal in living above his fortune, and his crime is greatly aggravated by the circumſtance of his being thereby unable to pay his juſt debt. Let us ſuppoſe, therefore, that he is puniſhed for this crime as much as it deſerves; that his goods are fairly diſtributed among his creditors, and that one half remains unpaid: Let us ſuppoſe alſo, that he adds no new crime to what is paſt, that he becomes a new man, and not only ſupports himſelf by honeſt induſtry, but does all in his power to pay what he ſtill owes.

I would now aſk, Is he further puniſhable, and really guilty for not paying more than he is able? Let every man conſult his conſcience, and ſay whether he can blame this man for not doing more than he is able to do. His guilt before his bankruptcy is out of the queſtion, as he has received the puniſhment due for it. But that his ſubſequent conduct is unblameable, every man muſt allow; and that, in his preſent ſtate, he is accountable for no more than he is able to do. His obligation is not cancelled, it returns with his ability, and can go no farther.

Suppoſe a ſailor, employed in the navy of his country, and longing for the eaſe of a public hoſpital as an invalid, to cut off his fingers, ſo as to diſable him from doing the duty of a ſailor; he is guilty of a great crime; but, after he has been puniſhed according to the demerit of his crime, will his captain inſiſt that he ſhall ſtill do the duty of a ſailor? Will he command him to go aloft when it is impoſſible for him to do it, and puniſh him as guilty of diſobedience? Surely if there be any ſuch thing as juſtice and injuſtice, this would be unjuſt and wanton cruelty.

Suppoſe

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Suppoſe a ſervant, through negligence and inattention, miſtakes the orders given him by his maſter, and, from this miſtake, does what he was ordered not to do. It is commonly ſaid that culpable ignorance does not excuſe a fault: This deciſion is inaccurate, becauſe it does not ſhew where the fault lies: The fault was ſolely in that inattention, or negligence, which was the occaſion of his miſtake: There was no ſubſequent fault.

This becomes evident, when we vary the caſe ſo far as to ſuppoſe, that he was unavoidably led into the miſtake without any fault on his part. His miſtake is now invincible, and, in the opinion of all moraliſts, takes away all blame; yet this new caſe ſuppoſes no change, but in the cauſe of his miſtake. His ſubſequent conduct was the ſame in both caſes. The fault therefore lay ſolely in the negligence and inattention which was the cauſe of his miſtake.

The axiom, That invincible ignorance takes away all blame, is only a particular caſe of the general axiom, That there can be no moral obligation to what is impoſſible; the former is grounded upon the latter, and can have no other foundation.

I ſhall put only one caſe more. Suppoſe that a man, by exceſs and intemperance, has entirely deſtroyed his rational faculties, ſo as to have become perfectly mad or idiotical; ſuppoſe him forewarned of his danger, and that, though he foreſaw that this muſt be the conſequence, he went on ſtill in his criminal indulgence. A greater crime can hardly be ſuppoſed, or more deſerving of ſevere puniſhment? Suppoſe him puniſhed as he deſerves; will it be ſaid, that the duty of a man is incumbent upon him now, when he has not the faculties of a man, or that he incurs new guilt when he is not a moral agent? Surely we may as well ſuppoſe a plant, or a clod of earth, to be a ſubject of moral duty.

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The deciſions I have given of theſe caſes, are grounded upon the fundamental principles of morals, the moſt immediate dictates of conſcience. If theſe principles are given up, all moral reaſoning is at an end, and no diſtinction is left between what is juſt and what is unjuſt. And it is evident, that none of theſe caſes furniſhes any exception to the axiom above mentioned. No moral obligation can be conſiſtent with impoſſibility in the performance.

Active power, therefore, is neceſſarily implied in the very notion of a moral accountable being. And if man be ſuch a being, he muſt have a degree of active power proportioned to the account he is to make. He may have a model of perfection ſet before him which he is unable to reach; but, if he does to the utmoſt of his power, this is all he can be anſwerable for. To incur guilt, by not going beyond his power, is impoſſible.

What was ſaid, in the firſt argument, of the limitation of our power, adds much ſtrength to the preſent argument. A man's power, it was obſerved, extends only to his voluntary actions, and has many limitations, even with reſpect to them.

His accountableneſs has the ſame extent and the ſame limitations.

In the rage of madneſs he has no power over himſelf, neither is he accountable, or capable of moral obligation. In ripe age, man is accountable in a greater degree than in non-age, becauſe his power over himſelf is greater. Violent paſſions, and violent motives alleviate what is done through their influence, in the ſame proportion as they diminiſh the power of reſiſtance.

There is, therefore, a perfect correſpondence between power, on the one hand, and moral obligation and accountableneſs, on the other. They not only correſpond in general, as they reſpect

voluntary

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voluntary actions only, but every limitation of the firſt produces a correſponding limitation of the two laſt. This, indeed, amounts to nothing more than that maxim of common ſenſe, confirmed by Divine authority, That to whom much is given, of him much will be required.

The ſum of this argument is, That a certain degree of active power is the talent which GOD hath given to every rational accountable creature, and of which he will require an account. If man had no power, he would have nothing to account for. All wiſe and all fooliſh conduct, all virtue and vice, conſiſt in the right uſe or in the abuſe of that power which GOD hath given us. If man had no power, he could neither be wiſe nor fooliſh, virtuous nor vicious.

If we adopt the ſyſtem of neceſſity, the terms *moral obligation* and *accountableneſs*, *praiſe* and *blame*, *merit* and *demerit*, *juſtice* and *injuſtice*, *reward* and *puniſhment*, *wiſdom* and *folly*, *virtue* and *vice*, ought to be diſuſed, or to have new meanings given to them when they are uſed in religion, in morals, or in civil government; for upon that ſyſtem, there can be no ſuch things as they have been always uſed to ſignify.

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CHAP. VIII.

Third Argument.

THAT man has power over his own actions and volitions appears, becauſe he is capable of carrying on, wiſely and prudently, a ſyſtem of conduct, which he has before conceived in his mind, and reſolved to proſecute.

I take it for granted, that, among the various characters of men, there have been ſome, who, after they came to years of underſtanding, deliberately laid down a plan of conduct, which they reſolved to purſue through life; and that of theſe, ſome have ſteadily purſued the end they had in view, by the proper means.

It is of no conſequence in this argument, whether one has made the beſt choice of his main end or not; whether his end be riches, or power, or fame, or the approbation of his Maker. I ſuppoſe only, that he has prudently and ſteadily purſued it; that, in a long courſe of deliberate actions, he has taken the means that appeared moſt conducive to his end, and avoided whatever might croſs it.

That ſuch conduct in a man demonſtrates a certain degree of wiſdom and underſtanding, no man ever doubted; and, I ſay, it demonſtrates, with equal force, a certain degree of power over his voluntary determinations.

This will appear evident, if we conſider, that underſtanding without power may project, but can execute nothing. A regular plan of conduct, as it cannot be contrived without underſtanding, ſo it cannot be carried into execution without power; and,

CHAP. VIII. therefore, the execution, as an effect, demonſtrates, with equal force, both power and underſtanding in the cauſe. Every indication of wiſdom, taken from the effect, is equally an indication of power to execute what wiſdom planned. And, if we have any evidence, that the wiſdom which formed the plan is in the man, we have the very ſame evidence, that the power which executed it is in him alſo.

In this argument, we reaſon from the ſame principles, as in demonſtrating the being and perfections of the Firſt Cauſe of all things.

The effects we obſerve in the courſe of nature require a cauſe. Effects wiſely adapted to an end, require a wiſe cauſe. Every indication of the wiſdom of the Creator is equally an indication of his power. His wiſdom appears only in the works done by his power; for wiſdom without power may ſpeculate, but it cannot act; it may plan, but it cannot execute its plans.

The ſame reaſoning we apply to the works of men. In a ſtately palace we ſee the wiſdom of the architect. His wiſdom contrived it, and wiſdom could do no more. The execution required, both a diſtinct conception of the plan, and power to operate according to that plan.

Let us apply theſe principles to the ſuppoſition we have made, That a man, in a long courſe of conduct, has determined and acted prudently in the proſecution of a certain end. If the man had both the wiſdom to plan this courſe of conduct, and that power over his own actions that was neceſſary to carry it into execution, he is a free agent, and uſed his liberty, in this inſtance, with underſtanding.

But if all his particular determinations, which concurred in the execution of this plan were produced, not by himſelf, but by